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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASWAp	Agriculture Sector Wide Approach
ASWAp-SP	Agriculture Sector Wide Approach - Support Project
DAES	Department of Agricultural Extension Services
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DAPS	Director of Agricultural Planning Services
DARS	Department of Agriculture Research Services
DCCMS	Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services
DCP	Department of Crop Production
DfID	Department for International Development, aka UKAid
DoI	Department of Irrigation
DP	Development Partner
EU	European Union
FA	Financing Agreement
FICA	Flanders International Co-operation Agency
GBI	Green Belt Initiative
GNI	Gross National Income
GoM	Government of Malawi
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IF	Irrigation Fund
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JICA	Japanese International Co-operation Agency
LF	Logframe
LRCD	Land Resources and Conservation Department
LUANAR	Lilongwe University for Agriculture and Natural Resources
MoAIWD	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development
MoLHUD	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
MDTF	Multi Donor Trust Fund
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MOST	Malawi Oilseeds Sector Transformation
MTR	Mid-term Review
NA	New Alliance
NAO-SU	National Authorizing Office Support Unit
NES	National Export Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NSA	Non-State Actor
PDO	Project Development Objective
PE	Programme Estimate
ROM	Results Oriented Monitoring
SSU	Seed Services Unit
ToR	Terms of Reference
WB	World Bank
WUA	Water Users' Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the final report of the mid-term review mission of the European Union programme of 'Support for the implementation of the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach and the Green Belt Initiative'. The country visit was from 1 November to 3 December 2016. The report has been prepared by DAI, EPRD, and Geotest Consortium. It provides an overall assessment of the performance of support plus Unallocated Technical Assistance.

The implementation of the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach Support Project and the Green Belt Initiative, both funded by the European Union (EU) as one programme of support, was conceived to contribute to the Malawi Government's objective of poverty reduction through increases in agricultural productivity and food security of rural communities, by improving systems and processes, strengthening of implementation capacities, and delivery of inputs to final beneficiaries. The Unallocated Technical Assistance Services component aims at further supporting the implementation of the first two components.

The objective of the whole three-part programme is consistent with the agricultural sector objectives and policies, and with the overarching Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, as well as with the EU policies of reducing hunger and poverty, and the creation of wealth through increased agriculture productivity and production.

The overall performance of support by the EU has been good with numerous success stories in various documents/reports, which were confirmed by examples of excellence in the field.

Component 1: EU Contribution to the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach Support Project (ASWAP-SP) – MDTF

There are a lot of successful stories associated with ASWAp-SP which leads to a conclusion that it is most likely that the impact of the project will be felt soon and in some cases is already happening.

Institutional Development and Capacity Building in Support of the ASWAp

A Core Function Analysis report for MoAIWD was approved by the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development. The study is seen as an important milestone in improving the performance of the agriculture sector through addressing the challenges that have hampered performance of the sector, and through the implementation of interventions that will enhance the efficiencies of the sector as a whole. For more details, refer to section 2.2.2.

Coordination of ASWAp processes in the form of Technical Working Group meetings, Joint Sector Reviews and Sector Working Groups meetings and reporting have improved greatly. The meetings are being held on a regular basis following recruitment of TA staff.

Through planning, monitoring and evaluation support activities, the budgeting process for the ministry now uses a programme-based budget system. This system makes it easy to track expenditures to programme focus areas. Data collection by the ministry has also improved tremendously which is important for evidence-based decision making for the sector.

Under Technical Systems and Skills Development, very limited progress has been made because the training was waiting for the core function analysis study results.

Administrative support activities: not much progress has been recorded because the improved fleet management system and asset inventory management system for the ministry has failed to roll out for reasons not known to the MTR.

Provision of support to land administration has registered good progress in the areas of training and policy on land related issues. The project has identified idle estate land, and has finalized land use policy, both of which are important for implementation of the Physical Planning Bill/Law of 2016.

Sustainable Food Security, Agricultural Growth and Diversification

Seed monitoring, seed crop field inspection, and laboratory seed testing for various crops has resulted in improved quality of seed on the market. FISP has benefited from this seed support component, though there is a growing feeling among Development Partners, shared by the MTE team, that Government of Malawi's heavy subsidisation of the fertiliser element of FISP (which is not supported by ASWAp-SP) is too highly concentrated on the single crop, maize, to the extent that it is not sustainable. The MTR's recommendation is that there should be a shift towards greater diversity. ASWAp-SP's continued involvement in FISP through the seed support component has also allowed DPs to negotiate useful reforms to the way FISP is being implemented such as: increasing private sector participation; fixing the coupon value; and improved targeting.

Two of the main indicators for food security are off-track: i) average maize yield at farmer level is 1.9MT/ha against a target of 2.1MT/ha; and ii) the percentage of food secure rural households is down to 61% against a target of 95%. However, the MTR team recognises that these are due to two years of rainfall that has been well below average, while in other parts of the country there has been flooding problem.

Under sustainable land management, conservation agriculture (CA) technologies most liked by farmers are reduced tillage and mulching practiced on the maize crop which has contributed to good results in the improved seed trials and demonstrations. The effectiveness of CA was greatest wherever community sensitization and mobilization had already been established.

Research and Extension have been successful in promoting crop diversification away from over-dependence on maize.

Parametric insurance policy from African Risk Capacity Limited Company covering maize crop production risk against drought was taken in the 2015/16 season at a cost of $5 million, had good intentions but failed to deliver timely assistance to more than 6.5 million people affected in 2016 because the pay-out of $8,1 million came out late in January 2017[1]. Contract farming strategy, a market risk mitigation measure for farmers has also been developed.

The rural roads component, with over 50% achievement of the target, has improved access to markets for farmers' produce. Many traders are now able to reach rural areas and this has helped in increasing competition.

[1] https://www.voanews.com/a/report-drought-insurance-an-experiment-that-failed-in-malawi/3870772.html

The Multi-Donor Trust Fund with its pool funding mechanism is a very flexible tool. It is able to respond to issues as they come up. Its flexibility has made it possible for ASWAp to address various issues which were originally not planned for such as response to drought, control of BBTV disease, and support to conduct various studies for the Ministry. It is a therefore a tool which should be continued.

The overall conclusion is that, with only 2 years of implementation, the direct real impact of ASWAp-SP in terms of reducing poverty, improving agricultural productivity and improving food security in rural areas is yet to be fully realised.

ASWAP -SP CHALLENGES

Though there is tremendous success on several fronts as presented above, the ASWAp-SP has faced challenges as follows:

- Delayed clearance for MDTF Internal Financial Reports has had negative implications on availability of funds to Cost Centres and this in turn has contributed to delays in implementation of some activities.
- Banana Bunchy Top disease eradication is facing problems of inadequate space in the glass house at Bvumbwe for handling of tissue culture banana seedlings. The problem creates a limitation on the number of banana seedlings that can be handled. However, the MTR team noted flexible and positive reaction to its comments immediately following its visit to Bvumbwe.
- There is now more focus on upscaling of existing proven technologies rather than generation of new technologies which has led to a decline in the number of research trials. The decline in the number of research trials is not compatible with the new research approach of research extension continuum. The MTR's view is that the best approach is to promote a balance between technology upscaling and research because they are both important and will complement each other well.
- The reporting system of the project does not encourage integration of activities by departments because it reports progress by department rather than by subject.
- Attempts have been made to address staff shortages through contracting out extension services to NGOs and the private sector, and though this has been successful where suitable NGOs are available, it is being hampered by a limited number of qualified NGOs and private sector individuals available for delivering extension services.
- DAESS structures in some districts are not operational and this affected coordination of various stakeholders at district level.
- Poor Financial Management performance led to suspension of direct funding to the districts and now it is being done through the ADDs combined with recruitment of Justification Officers for the ADDs in order to improve internal control and reporting; intensification of monitoring visits on finance issues; use of the internal audit section in the ministry; and timely submission of Tompro based IFRs.

Green Belt Initiative (GBI)

Support to irrigation integrates participation of other line ministries' staff, Non-State Actors and the private sector. The GBI is yet to show impact because of long delays in implementation (Section 1.1) as a result of which none of the intended beneficiaries have water available for irrigation at the time of the MTR's country visit. However, physical scheme development and development of the soft elements are on course. It can be expected that this will improve farmers' access to irrigated agriculture within one to three years.

Progress in support of the establishment of the Irrigation Fund (IF) is moving slowly. The IF is still not operational, and funds have not been committed because the establishment process involves stakeholder workshops to make them aware of their commitments.

Delays in programme implementation are due to time-consuming communication and decision processes between EUD, NAO-SU and Department of Irrigation (DoI), including planning, proposal writing and review, forward and backward communication, negotiations, resubmissions, approvals etc.

The performance of the PE component is considered satisfactory regarding the realization of its objectives and respective activities but the efficiency of the PEs is not good. Training activities of DoI staff have strengthened the quality of irrigation scheme development and the creation of own capacity in DoI to develop irrigation schemes after the end of the EU support.

Implementation contracts for six medium-sized grant schemes have been awarded. Physical scheme development, WUA organizational development activities, training in marketing, agribusiness skills, and catchment protection activities are on course. The Bwanje dam is under construction and is expected to be completed in January 2018 (section 2.2.3). GBI benefits in terms of increased production could be expected gradually from that date onwards when the physical infrastructure will have been completed and irrigation water will become available for agricultural production.

The MTR team's overall assessment of support to the irrigation component is that performance has been poor especially on the establishment of the IF and the development of the large and medium scale irrigation schemes.

Unallocated Technical Assistance (TA)

Unallocated TA is by design a flexible resource, which is available to support ad-hoc needs and different studies judged necessary by the GoM in support of agriculture development but which were not envisaged at the time of developing workplans and budgets. The tool has been therefore useful, and needs to be continued and supported.

The following are some of the studies/initiatives that were supported, with a description of how the outputs have been put to use:

- G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi Facilitator. The resources allowed identification of 15 priority policy actions, facilitated DP funding of priority actions, and attracted private sector investments in agriculture.
- G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi Coordinator, November 2016. Based on the successful outcomes from the outgoing Facilitator, the EU is funding a new Coordinator.

- Some of the of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 Farm Input Subsidy Programme outputs, such as regular seed testing, are being used. This has improved quality of seed,
- Mapping of Agriculture Research Funded Interventions in Malawi came up with an important and interesting recommendation on the adoption of a 'Research to extension continuum' approach.
- Formulation of the 11th EDF AFIKEPO Nutrition Programme in Malawi has provided the EU with a framework for funding nutrition interventions, probably in 2017.
- Formulation of the 11th EDF KULIMA Programme in Malawi results are being used for providing funding into the agriculture sector, likely in 2017.
- Donor Nutrition Security Group Coordinator provides professional and technical support to the Chair of the Donor Nutrition Security Group (DoNUTS) and other troika members to effectively carry out their responsibilities.
- Land Profiling Study has made the analogue reports of 1991 become user-friendly and can be used to produce crop and area specific recommendations based on crop suitability..

Overall, the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the various unallocated TA activities are happy with the delivery of the programme results, and the results and recommendations of almost all the studies have been utilised for a wide variety of services.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the final report of the mid-term review mission of the programme of 'Support for the implementation of the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach-Support Project (ASWAp) and the Green Belt Initiative (GBI). The country visit was from 1 November to 3 December 2016. ASWAp-SP and GBI were conceived with the aim of addressing some of the challenges which the agriculture sector is facing.

In July 2015, Malawi was rated by the World Bank (WB) as the poorest country in the world with its annual gross income per capita (GNI) at USD250. Limited progress was registered in poverty reduction, which in 2011 stood at 50.7% from 52.4% of the population in 2005, and which has been stagnating or only slightly increasing over the last 6 years. Malawi is the 8th most densely populated country in Africa and the population growth rate is 2.8% per annum. Agriculture is an important economic driver for Malawi. It employs 85% of the population and contributes 70% of the Gross Domestic Product. The overarching policy documents for Malawi, in particular, the Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II 2011-2016) recognise the importance of agriculture to the economy. Agriculture is an important tool for poverty eradication and achieving food security. In view of this, the government of Malawi (GoM) developed the Malawi Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp 2011-2015) and the Green Belt Initiative as a means for achieving the agricultural growth and poverty reduction goals of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS).

The goal of ASWAp is to increase agricultural productivity with the aim of making Malawi a hunger free nation, enabling people to access nutritious foods, and increasing the contribution of agro-processing to economic growth. The GBI was formulated against a background of the country's vulnerability to food insecurity and economic shocks due to overdependence on rain-fed agriculture. The GBI was therefore seen as a means of using the available land and water resources to increase irrigation farming thereby hedging against the negative effects of global climate change. The MGDS II, GBI and ASWAp policy objectives are therefore in line with the EU's policy objectives for development cooperation of reducing and eventually eradicating poverty consistent with the objectives of sustainable development and the gradual integration of the ACP countries into the world economy. Bilateral cooperation between the EU and Malawi for support to the implementation of ASWAp and GBI was through the 10th EDF National Indicative Programme (NIP), which is as well fully aligned with the national development strategy.

EU support was formalised through a Financing Agreement, signed in October 2012. The programme comprises two components as follows: (1) Support to implementation of the ASWAp, (2) and Support to Irrigation. In addition to these two components there is Unallocated Technical Assistance which is there to ensure smooth implementation of GBI and ASWAp-SP components.

In this general context, the EU commissioned an external mid-term review of the 2 programme' components to judge its success to date, draw out lessons from the experience, provide related recommendations and explore possibilities to improve the complementarity of the programme with other on-going projects.

1.1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The EU Financing Agreement (FA) signed in 2012 by the Government of Malawi and the European Union is for support to the implementation of ASWAp and GBI; Unallocated TA is there to ensure smooth implementation of the two components.

The Financing Agreement was signed under the 10th EDF on 17th October 2012 with a budget of € 69.1 million. One of the conditions under the 10th EDF was that budgets needed to be fully committed within three years of signature, a condition referred to as D+3; the D+3 for the programme was 16th October 2015. Realising that a year was lost without much progress, especially on GBI because the designs for irrigation schemes were not ready from RIPD II, a request for plus D1 was made and granted making the Financing Agreement to have D+4. The D+4 for the programme was then extended and became 17th October 2016. However, the GBI Component was again delayed as a result of a one year delay between the call for proposals and signing of grant contracts. The grant contracts were eventually signed in September 2016 instead of September 2015. This means in essence that the MTR took place just one month after signing of the grant contracts

In November 2016, with the D+4 deadline, the EU Delegation made a decision not to commit any more funding. Close to € 61 million has been committed and disbursed. For ASWAp-SP and Unallocated TA, all the planned funding amount has been committed. The uncommitted amount of over € 4 million is for GBI while the remaining unspent funds are related to other specific budget lines like 'Contingencies' and the 'Evaluation & Audit' budget lines.

The objective of the programme is to contribute to the Malawi Government's objective of poverty reduction in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MDGS).

The specific objective is to increase agricultural productivity and food security of rural communities by improving systems and processes, strengthening of implementation capacities and delivery of inputs to final beneficiaries.

The programme aims at strengthening national systems and building institutional capacity for the implementation of the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach and the Green Belt Initiative so as to deliver improved services to final beneficiaries.

The EU programme of support to the implementation of ASWAp and GBI was developed in the context of existing policy framework (ASWAp, MGDS II (2011-2016), GBI document) and fully supports the GoM as well as the development agenda of Cooperating Partners, and regional programmes of CAADP reconfirmed in the 2014 Malabo Declaration.

The logframe (LF) of the *EU Support to the implementation of ASWAp & GBI* is a reconstructed LF which was drafted by the present long-term TA to DoI because it was never produced at the time when the programme was being formulated. It was thought that it was not necessary since it was going to directly contribute to the Mult-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF). However, with time it was felt that the LF was still necessary, hence its eventual design. The LF has two results for ASWAp-SP and two results for GBI. These are shown in Table 1 below. The EU support to ASWAp & GBI Identification Fiche acknowledges the identification of 18 prioritized result indicators for ASWAp-SP.

Though support to both the implementation of ASWAp (EU contribution to the ASWAp-SP MDTF) and GBI benefit from the same financing agreement, there is no integration of the two components. This is so because ASWAp-SP did not have a component on irrigation which is

why irrigation activities could neither be supported by the project resources nor reported. The absence of integration has resulted in irrigation activities suffering from a lack of agribusiness support from the Extension Department. When DoI has made requests to DAES for agribusiness support the response has been poor, or extension staff do not turn up at all. In ASWAp-SP reports, irrigation is rarely mentioned even though agriculture technologies being promoted by ASWAp-SP under rain-fed agriculture are also promoted in irrigation schemes.

Table 1 Constructed Logframe Result Statements for ASWAp-SP and GBI

Component 1: ASWAp-SP Result Areas	Component 2: GBI Result Area
1. Systems and procedures for the ASWAp implementation strengthened through: • Support to ASWAp management and coordination (including a targeted core functional analysis) • Support to planning and M&E (indicators, underlying statistics and estimates, data collection, analysis and reporting systems to strengthen impact and performance monitoring). • Support to administrative system development (strengthening of administrative systems; human resource strengthening; strengthening asset management).	2. Irrigation Fund established through: • Capacity development of the MoAIWD • Support to the DoI for technical studies (legal aspects of the Irrigation Fund, support to drafting funding guidelines, etc.). • Coordination, monitoring and supervision of investments (of the Irrigation Fund). • Carrying out an assessment of the Irrigation Fund to determine if conditions are met to channel EU funds through national procedures
3. Food security risks mitigated with improved use of existing risk management instruments through: • Sustainable Productivity Growth Initiative (Farm Input Subsidy Programme including both seeds and Logistics Unit). • Seed certification and monitoring • Agriculture technology delivery systems • Market-based risk management instruments such as Macro and Micro Weather Insurance (including insurance premium payment, installation of weather stations and improvement of data processing and reporting). • Extension and research services for improved national and household food security. • Improvement and Maintenance of Unpaved Rural Roads[2]	4. Farmers' access to irrigated agriculture improved: • Planning, supervising and implementing irrigation developments through a variety of procurement procedures and contractual arrangements (in conformity with applicable procedures). • The infrastructure developments will be complemented by activities needed to ensure their sustainability (based on in-country lessons learned and 'good practices') such as: • Consideration of land tenure and use (land mapping, formulation of land use agreements/bye-laws etc.); • Institutional capacity building for smallholders and water user groups and associations (group formation and registration/legalization, production of O&M plans, exploring out-grower potential and initial outsourcing of O&M/sub-contracting etc.); • Analysis, establishment and/or strengthening of market linkages for sale of produce and cash generation for O&M (development of business plans etc.); • Environmental and social impact assessments and mitigation measures (catchment protection, afforestation, buffer zone creation, promotion of soil conservation practices etc.) and • Ensure mobility of line Ministry staff to the regions or across Divisions and Districts;

Source : DoI TA Constructed Logframe

[2] Source: ToRs for MTR for the Improvement and Maintenance of Unpaved Rural Roads only, the rest are from the EU Financing and Technical Administrative Procedures for the EU support

For the EU contribution to ASWAp-SP (MDTF), the main assumptions for successful implementation of the component are presented below:

ASWAp-SP MAIN ASSUMPTIONS
• MoAIWD can actively engage in the ASWAp & GBI processes in collaboration with a wide range of DPs, private sector, civil society and across line ministries / other government institutions • EU funds are used for their intended purposes and in conformity with EU procedures (in order to avoid ineligible expenditures, etc.). • Access to inputs is improved by GoM. • Irrigated farming is promoted by GoM. • Contract farming arrangements are promoted by GoM. • Farmer institutions are strengthened by GoM. • Productivity of non-traditional crops is promoted by GoM. • Agricultural productivity and production for both domestic and export markets is promoted by GoM. • Linkages of farmers to input and output markets are strengthened by GoM. • Appropriate technology development, transfer and absorption is promoted by GoM. • Productivity of livestock and fisheries is enhanced by GoM. • Soil and water conservation techniques are promoted by GoM.

Source: DoI TA Constructed Logframe

The above assumptions still hold. The unallocated TA is supporting implementation of some of the activities. For the GBI, the main assumptions for successful implementation of the component are presented below:

GBI MAIN ASSUMPTIONS
• Irrigation development remains a priority for the GoM • Institutional mandates for irrigation development are clarified and effective structures established • Inter- and intra-ministerial coordination is enhanced • The increase in irrigation will lead to increased agricultural productivity resulting in improved food security and export potential of agricultural produce • Irrigation development is pursued as an integrated approach that does not only include infrastructure development but also organizational development, soil conservation, water resources management, environmental protection, provision of other infrastructure, agricultural business promotion and establishment of market linkages (i.e. irrigation for food security & income generation) • A favourable enabling environment is developed for public institutions and private companies investing in irrigation • Sufficient high quality proposals for medium scale irrigation developments are received from non-state actors (i.e. the call for proposals is successful) • Communities support the development of irrigation schemes

The above assumptions still hold. The unallocated TA is supporting implementation of some of the activities. However, GoM still needs to make more effort towards ensuring that all elements of the assumptions are fulfilled.

The Unallocated TA does not have specific result areas because its activities are demand-driven identified through specific ad-hoc needs identified by EU or GoM whose implementation is aimed at supporting smooth implementation of ASWAp-SP and GBI.

The management structure of the programme for the EU support is articulated around the following three main areas of activities: (1) Support for Implementation of ASWAp through EU contribution to the ASWAp-SP MDTF, (2) Support to Irrigation (GBI) and Unallocated Technical Assistance (TA) Services.

EU support to ASWAp-SP is provided through a contribution to the Mult-donor Trust Fund (MDTF) which is a funding mechanism that uses pool-funding principles. A series of three agreements have been the basis of its design and implementation. These agreements are the following: (1) GoM and EU Financing Agreement which is the basis of the overall EU

programme of support to the Implementation of ASWA and GBI; (2) the EU and World Bank (WB) Administrative Agreement which is the specific contract linking EU and the WB in relation with the current AA; and (3) WB and the Government of Malawi Grant Agreement setting the conditions and arrangements for the grants to be provided through the MDTF with support from the various donors (Government of Flanders, EU, Irish Aid, USAID, DFID and Norway).

The GBI component and Unallocated TA are wholly financed by EU. For the GBI Component, the contracting authority is NAO but day-to-day management is delegated to DoI with the help of the Long-term TAs (Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader), an Imprest Administrator and an Imprest Accounting Officer. The support is provided through the MoAIWD, DoI. Implementation of Unallocated TA used the centralised direct implementation by EUD making EUD responsible for day-to-day management.

The support to the implementation of ASWAp and GBI is composed of two distinct components across which activities are implemented.

Component 1: Implementation of the ASWAp-SP: this has two subcomponents: a) Capacity development for ASWAp-SP implementation – systems and procedures - which is aimed at strengthening administrative and management systems in the MoAIWD to implement the ASWAp-SP which will facilitate increased use of harmonised funding in support of the agricultural investment strategy; and b) Food security risk management which is aimed at implementing existing instruments of the Government's Food Security Risk Management Strategy.

Component 2: Irrigation also has two sub-components: a) Support to the establishment of the Irrigation Fund (IF) whose aim is to establish the IF in line with existing Government policies, prepare the ground for future DPs (including the EU) and private sector investment in the irrigation sector, using, as much as possible, national rules and procedures; and b) Development of medium and large scale irrigation schemes whose aim is to develop 5 to 8 medium-scale irrigation schemes of approximately 80-200ha each, and 2 to 3 large scale irrigation schemes in an integrated approach including aspects of institutional, social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Apart from the constructed logframe, the ASWAp-SP component also has a results framework which is based on one project development objective (PDO) of improving the effectiveness of investments aimed at food security and sustainable agricultural growth, and strengthening the natural resource base in agricultural lands, through a doubling of the area under sustainable land management as a basis for securing ecosystem services and sustainable agricultural productivity. The PDO has 4 indicators, which are further linked to the four Intermediary Result areas (for details refer to Table 2 below).

Table 2: Project Development Objectives Indicators Linked to Intermediary Results

ID.	PDO Indicator	Links to Intermediary Results (IR)
1	Average 4 year national maize yields (MT/ha)	Refer IR 2; IR 1
2	Percentage of food secure rural households	Refer IR 2; IR1
3	Percentage of MoAIWD investment budget execution	Refer IR 3, IR1
4	Percentage change in motorized traffic volume on targeted rural roads	Refer IR 4

1. Intermediate Result 1 (IR 1): *Improved planning, monitoring and evaluation of public investments in agriculture*
2. Intermediate Result 2 (IR 2): *Increased coverage of farmers receiving technical advice from various extension providers*
3. Intermediate Result 3 (IR 3): *Project resources used in accordance with the project's objectives and procedures*
4. Intermediate Result 4 (IR 4): *Improved market access through upgraded and rehabilitated feeder roads*

Source: World Bank

Note: The MTR would like to note that the constructed logframe for the EU programme of Support ASWAp-SP Result Areas and the Intermediary result areas for ASWAp-SP Result Framework differ in terms of the total number of result areas, but the technical content still looks similar.

1.2. MID-TERM REVIEW PROCESS

The Mid Term Review Team was contracted by the EU Delegation to Malawi [EUD] and visited Malawi in November 2016 to:

a. Make an overall independent and reliable assessment of the performance of the EU programme of support to the ASWAp and GBI programme, paying particular attention to the impact of the project actions against its objectives; and

b. Identify lessons and propose practical recommendations to the decision-makers in the GoM and EU on how the programme should be implemented for the rest of its duration and estimate what can be achieved within this time frame.

The full Terms of Reference (ToR) can be found at Annex 10, and the abbreviated curricula vitae of each of the MTR Team members responsible for the different components can be found at Annex 9. The MTR Team's itinerary is presented as Annex 6.

1.2.1. Evaluation Methodology

The MTR used a combination of tools to gather information including a literature review, discussions with EU, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD), Malawi Mangoes, Seed Services Unit at Chitedze, ICRISAT, Department of Agriculture Research Services (DARs), World bank, CIP, and District Agricultural Development Officers (DADOs) among others. This was complemented by field visits, focus group discussions, beneficiary meetings, and consultations with key stakeholders.

The methodology employed during the field visits was one of Rapid Rural Appraisal using semi-structured interviews where similar but slightly evolving questions were asked of people in the same position in the different districts visited. They ranged from Programme Managers, (DADOs) and their staff, District Agricultural Extension Service (DAES) staff, farmers, lead farmers and fisher folk, private sector actors such as agro-dealers, processors, and civil society, and non-government organisations.

1.2.2. Limitations of the Methodology

Due to time constraints, it was not possible to visit all the key stakeholders nor was it possible to discuss implementation with all those taking part in programme-supported activities.

Visits were made to 8 of the 28 districts participating in MDTF ASWAp-SP and GBI activities. Beneficiaries of MDTF ASWAp-SP and GBI were visited for the purpose of data collection from the direct beneficiaries of the programme. Usually the MTR team was accompanied by DAES staff, and where appropriate the MTR team asked to interview beneficiaries without

DAES staff present. Where it was not possible to engage directly with projects or activities, documentary evidence through literature review was used by studying various progress reports referenced in this report.

Time did not permit any systematic universal country-wide verification of ASWAp-SP indicators, but the methodology above delivered enough information to make the informed judgements on their veracity that are given here.

The MTR Team is confident that the materials collected from a range of sources provide sufficient evidence for the findings, conclusions and recommendations made in this report.

2. FINDINGS

2.1 PROBLEMS AND NEEDS (RELEVANCE) AND QUALITY OF DESIGN

The Programme has Overall Objective and Purpose/Specific Objectives statements that captured issues of poverty reduction. The Overall Objective is 'Poverty reduction in line with Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), while the Specific Objective is 'To increase agricultural productivity and food security of rural communities'. They are in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), the ASWAp-SP document (2011-2015) and the GBI Strategy Document (2012-2016), and recently the National Agriculture Policy of 2016.

The MGDS objective is to create wealth through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development as a means of achieving poverty reduction. The programme is contributing to the achievement of the following MGDS priorities: agriculture and food security, irrigation and water development, climate change, natural resources and environmental management, and integrated rural development.

The ASWAp is Malawi's harmonised and prioritised agricultural development agenda. It is the strategic framework aimed at increasing agricultural productivity with a view to improving food security, diversifying food production and increasing agricultural incomes for rural people.

The Green Belt Initiative (GBI) aim is 'Creation of wealth through increased agricultural production, productivity and enterprise development for domestic and export markets.' It aims to achieve this through: increasing production and productivity of crops, livestock and fisheries technologies; improving market access; increasing volumes and quality of value-added products; and improving access to other socio-economic infrastructure within the context of the rural growth centres. The GBI is an initiative of a former President of Malawi aiming to expand the area under irrigation and is expected to ensure rapid and sustained irrigation development necessary for managing global climate change impacts. The country has experienced devastating effects of climate change, and irrigation development is considered as one of the vital interventions for mitigating climate change. The GBI translates the Government of Malawi's ambition in terms of irrigation development into a comprehensive programme and action plan. The aim of the GBI is to enhance the national production of crops, livestock and fish through the utilisation of water from lakes and perennial rivers.

The programme is also consistent with the aims of the EU Cotonou Agreement of promoting the development of a common strategic approach to poverty reduction, the objectives of sustainable development, and the gradual integration of ACP countries into the world economy. Similarly, the Financing Agreement (FA) for the programme and its annexes are aligned to the MDGs.

The programme is, however, ambitious and wide in scope both in geographic terms since it is nationwide covering all the 28 districts, and the programme content which is also very broad.

The MTR Team can therefore confirm that the programme objectives are consistent with the sector programme itself, the sector policies and the overarching MGDs as well as EU policies on Effectiveness of Aid, the Paris and Accra Declarations on Aid Effectiveness, and DAC Guidelines on Sector Wide Approaches.

However, the MTR has noted that the two components (GBI and ASWAp-SP) lack integration, which could be attributed to the design which encourage compartmentalisation, rather than integration of effort at the higher level. Despite the two programmes being implemented

through two different modalities i.e. MDTF for ASWAp-SP and a combination of PE and Grants modalities for GBI/Irrigation Support, efforts for integration of the components would have still been possible through the ASWAp-Sp relevant technical working group structures. The arrangement would have allowed all departments in the MoAIWD to identify their entry points in support of GBI. The MTR has noted that DAES department of the MoAIWD is not supporting agribusiness activities in irrigation schemes developed and implemented by DoI. The lack of integration of the components is a reflection of poor design of the programme.

2.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE (EFFECTIVENESS)

2.2.1 Overview

Delivery of Results depends on two key elements which are: (1) the successful completion of activities that are necessary, and together provide sufficient conditions for the results to happen; and (2) critical assumptions needed to create an enabling environment, once appropriate activities have been completed. Such assumptions could be availability of adequate rainfall or political stability etc. without which the delivery of results would be difficult to achieve. These elements are normally clearly defined in the logframe on which a project is normally based. For this Financing Agreement, the MTR Team can confirm that the assumptions were clearly defined in the constructed logframe. However, some of the assumptions appear to be activities themselves and the defined assumptions appeared to be too many.

Regarding the GBI, delays in signing of the grant contracts severely constrained implementation of the medium and large scale schemes by almost one year. Despite this, the project has initiated and completed a significant number of activities at various levels including at the level of final beneficiaries in rural communities.

The following analysis presents the extent to which the activities implemented were both *necessary and sufficient* to generate the expected results in view of the programme objectives to be achieved as stated in the constructed logframe.

2.2.2 ASWAp-SP

ASWAp-SP is not a traditional project. It is a broad and ambitious programme aimed at bringing changes in research, extension, land management, catchment conservation, as well as coordination, capacity building, planning etc., and has recently included livestock and fisheries. It has interventions beyond MoAIWD, touching activities of other line Ministries such as: Lands; Housing and Urban Development; Trade, Industry and Private Sector Development; and Transport and Public Works in the context of markets and rural roads. It also embraces the private sector and NGOs. Assessment of this main component was articulated around the following main areas of delivery: Result 1 (Institutional Development and Capacity Building in Support of the ASWAp); and Result 2 (Sustainable Food Security, Agricultural Growth and Diversification).

Result 1: ***Institutional Development and Capacity Building in Support of the ASWAp***. The core focus of the result area is to improve the capacities of the MoAIWD planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public investments in the agricultural sector through the delivery of the following key activities: support to ASWAp Management and Coordination; support to planning, monitoring and evaluation (indicators, underlying statistics and estimates, data collection, analysis and reporting systems to strengthen impact and performance monitoring); and support to administrative system development (strengthening

of administrative systems, human resource and asset management). The component also supports strengthening of existing land administration structures at all levels in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. The following paragraphs highlight some of the successful stories.

A Core Function Analysis (CFA) study for MoAIWD was carried out and finalised in 2016. The report identified core of the State, and non-core functions to be transferred to non-state actors other stages of the CFA were already done in 2003 and 2007. . The results of the study were approved by the Government. The findings of the study when fully implemented would lead to improved delivery of prioritized core agricultural public services. The study is seen as an important milestone in improving the performance of the agriculture sector by addressing the following challenges: weak institutional implementation capabilities in the public and non-public sectors combined with poor role clarification; and little involvement of other stakeholders as partners in setting development priorities and duplications among Departments, and a large vacancy rate, both of which have hampered the performance of the Sector and the Ministry to deliver quality services. It is expected that the CFA will result in the implementation of interventions that will enhance not only the efficiencies of the MoAIWD but of the sector as a whole.

Coordination of ASWAp processes in the form of Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings, Joint Sector Reviews and Sector Working Groups meetings and reporting have improved greatly. The TWGs comprise Food Security and Risk Management, Commercial Agriculture, Agro-processing and Market Development, Sustainable Agricultural Land and Water Management, Technology Generation and Dissemination and Institutional Development and Capacity. The meetings are being held on a regular basis following recruitment of TA staff.

Planning, monitoring and evaluation support activities have targeted strengthening the Department of Agricultural Planning Services, Agricultural Development Divisions (ADDs) and District Agricultural Offices to engage in more effective agricultural sector planning, monitoring and evaluation. The main substantive outcomes of this are: First, the budgeting process for the Ministry now uses programme based budget system which has aligned budget lines to the ASWAp focus areas as per the recommendations of the Public Expenditure Review. The usefulness of programme based budgeting system is that it makes easier to track expenditures to programme focus areas, thereby enhancing accountability. Second, data collection by the ministry has improved tremendously as a result of the reviewed ASWAp M&E Plan and data collection guidelines for all the 7 Technical Working Groups, including also the Agriculture Production Estimates methodology and Gender mainstreaming in Monitoring and Evaluation. Guidelines for data collection where indicators, source of data and responsible TWGs are clearly defined have been developed. This has improved data collection which is important for evidence-based decision making for the sector.

Under Technical Systems and Skills Development, very limited progress has been registered because the training was awaiting the core function analysis (CFA) study results. The report was finalised in July 2016 and had was released in December 2016. So far no training had been supported but the project supported recruitment of 200 AEDOs who are to be trained at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)/Natural Resources College (NRC).

Administrative support activities are aimed at establishing improved fleet management system and asset inventory management system in the ministry. Not much progress has been

recorded as the improved fleet management system and asset inventory management system for the ministry has failed to roll out.

Result 2**: *Sustainable Food Security, Agricultural Growth and Diversification***

This component has helped in achieving crop diversification through: support for crop nutrient management using sorghum, improving access to certified legume seed through supporting breeder seed production and demonstrations for groundnuts, pigeon peas, beans, and soya bean of which 13 tons out of the targeted 56 tons was produced; basic seed production for soya beans, groundnuts and beans of which 63 tons was produced. Other activities involved cassava, sweet potato and banana production promotion through running demonstration plots and distribution of improved disease-free planting material.

Under sustainable land management, conservation agriculture technologies most liked by farmers are reduced tillage and mulching practiced on the maize crop contributing to good results from the improved seed trials and demonstrations. Pit planting is still demonstrated as a sustainable rainwater management technology with most farmers adopting it in their trials but wide-scale adoption is yet to be realised. However, crop yields under pit planting are much better than normal planting. Farmers also implement other soil and water conservation and soil fertility improvement technologies like use of compost and khola manure. However, fewer than half of the targeted farmers are practising sustainable land management and conservation agriculture technologies because of the initial high labour requirement. The challenge is sustainability of the activities beyond project life in view of the fact, already mentioned, that fewer than half of the targeted farmers are practising the technologies.

Maize has also been supported with regard to issues surrounding control and prevention of aflatoxin in maize and on-farm demonstrations of improved maize varieties not well known to farmers. Supervisory visits showed that participants who were trained on aflatoxin had grasped and practised almost 80% of what they were trained in 2011. The impact of the activity on the farmers is yet to be felt but it is expected to improve the quality of the produce as farmers start putting it into practice.

The Seed sector has also been supported with seed monitoring, seed crop field inspection and laboratory seed testing for various crops with the aim of improving the quality of seed for the domestic and export markets. As a result of the seed monitoring activity, issues of poor seed germination are no longer common. There are also plans to start inspecting and monitoring breeder seed in the 2016/17 season.

MDTF Emergency Flood Recovery Programme using cassava and sweet potato was also supported by the project. This is the component which saw the use of both Government and NGOs, and as such demonstrated the use of pluralistic extension service delivery policy. 14 NGOs successfully procured and distributed cassava bundles and sweet potato bundles in all the districts. Government delivered the services (public goods) where the NGOs did not show interest (in Neno and Mwanza districts); or withdrew (in Mzimba South, Nkhatabay and Nsanje districts).

Efficient Agricultural Research, Technical and Extension Services Delivery. Research and extension have been successful in promoting crop diversification away from over-dependence on maize for food and income and towards cassava, sweet potatoes, soya bean, and other crops. Farmers not only know how to grow these crops but also how to prepare them as food. This is only one step away from confirming empirical impact from improved

nutrition (which of course cannot be expected so soon). Evidence so far suggests that 90% of the farmers are aware of the improved maize varieties and how to grow them. Demonstrations have played a key role in creating awareness of these maize varieties among farmers.

Catchment Conservation

Of all the problems addressed in this report, few can be more important than catchment conservation together with its two principal guardians, conservation agriculture and agro-forestry. They are particularly relevant now because the science is mature, the practice of all three are fairly widely known, almost no one disagrees with the claimed benefits such as increased productivity, reduced labour (eventually), reduced risk of crop failure or low yields during droughts, increased average yields, reduced use of fertilizer, and increased soil fertility. But uptake of CA and agro-forestry has been low overall due to high labour demand, and catchment conservation is not treated as it should be as a cross-cutting basis of all agricultural development but as just another component. Catchment conservation is all pervasive and should be treated as such.

Effectiveness was greatest wherever there had been community sensitization and mobilization established as the foundation before individual farmers were then persuaded to adopt CA (especially) or agro-forestry (to a somewhat lesser extent). This was repeatedly evident during several interviews with groups of farmers. In some cases, this community mobilization was backed up with local bye-laws that were enforced effectively and enthusiastically by the community. Thus, when communities decided on how livestock should be managed and where they should graze so they would not disturb the maize stover mulch, those whose stock infringed the bye-laws would be fined, and in some cases their goats would be seized, killed and the meat distributed to the injured parties. Some communities were clearly close to a tipping point where the majority then saw the sense of adopting CA and agro-forestry. Such cases are far from being mainstreamed, indeed they are not at all common, but they seem to be on the borderline between demonstration and the beginnings of wider adoption. To repeat, current disjointed interventions will only be fully effective under an all-embracing catchment conservation umbrella. Currently it's just a component, not mainstreamed but being integrated within the efforts under LRCD, i.e. promoted through CA. The LRCD in its effort to promote catchment conservation has implemented both CA and pit planting. The challenge of catchment conservation is that the benefits to the community are not immediate. This challenge is exacerbated by lack of Community Empowerment because of lack of opportunities for maximising community engagement.

The focus under Sustainable Land and Water Management was on upscaling the technologies rather than research led trials but some research led trials were done on one technology. Progress so far as of June 2016 towards achieving project targets in 2017is very good with already over 100% achievement as follows: A total of 188,207 ha is under Conservation Agriculture against a target of 200,000 ha, level of organic matter application in conservation agriculture in sandy soils is standing at 3.2% exceeding a target of 1.5%[3], accumulative researcher led trial achieved 11,333, (7,192M, 5,298F) against the project target of 700; a total of 129,156 ha have been put under the complementary soil and water conservation (14,567 ha) and soil fertility improvement (114,997 ha) technologies for sustainable land and water

[3] Malawi - Agricultural Sector Wide Approach – Support Project (P128576 Ida Credit - Cr. 5069 & Multi-Donor Trust Fund P148964 - Tf016364) Implementation Support Mission May 16 – 27, 2016 *Aide Memoire*

management[4]. The major challenge which is there is that despite training of 184 staff (137M and 47F) on Environmental and Social Safeguards and a total of 9,763 farmers (5,503 M and 4,260 F), there are no traceable Environmental and Social Management and Monitoring Plans (ESMPs) available. Other challenges facing conservation agriculture, despite these high achievements on CA targets is the competition for crop residues use for CA and animal feeding bush burning, and cutting down of trees for firewood and charcoal production.

Conservation agriculture is a good practice but it is not working well for Malawi because of bush burning, and cutting down of trees for firewood and charcoal production. However, more detailed analysis would be required to ascertain the factors hampering the success of CA.

Research. The CIP model of research demonstrates how the current GoM model could improve effectiveness. The CIP model differs in the following ways: infrastructure and equipment rented rather than owned; strong follow-up at district level multiplication facilities and performance trials; a motivated "can do"[5] attitude in finding ways of releasing varieties early, e.g. by growing two or three crops a year; and a "field to kitchen table" approach as opposed to a purely agronomic approach.

Extension.

The program has been supporting the lead farmer approach, which is a good innovation that works well for scaling up technology dissemination. The program has also supported the use of plant doctors and plant clinics. A total of 62 (21F, 41M) Agricultural Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) were trained as plant doctors. The trainings focussed on how AEDOs can operate a plant clinic and this will lead into establishment of 49 plant clinics in Dowa, Zomba, Mulanje, Thyolo and Dedza districts where farmers are getting advice on the various plant health problems. The doctors are supported with prescriptions books, branded coats, plastic tables and chairs that are used as they are providing the advisory services. The increased number of plant doctors has assisted in reducing the plant health problems leading to reduced crop yield losses[6].

Where extension staff are well supported with transport, manuals and practical field training, such as within the contracted NGO Find Your Feet, each extensionist can reach 30 lead farmers who in turn reach a further 15 farm families. In the government extension service, which is less well served with this support, these ratios are much lower. Similarly, NGO extension staff who are well supported with transport, can typically cover two extension sections whereas the less well supported government extension staff can cover only one.

The MTR team noted that MoAIWD staff, in HQ and the districts, had almost no knowledge of how these problems have been addressed in neighbouring countries, nor were they aware that the problems faced by Malawi's farm advisory system are or have been common to all of them. Several of these countries have been successful in greatly improving their extension services and in making them sustainable as ASWAp-SP also seeks to do. This has led to the MTR recommendation for a study tour to neighbouring countries such as Tanzania, Kenya and Rwanda. Among several innovative approaches that could be studied are: a) vouchers

[4] The Agriculture Sector Wide Approach – Support Project Annual Report 2015-2016
[5] This is explained more fully later in the report
[6] The Agricultural Sector Wide - Support Project (ASWp-SP) Annual Report 2015/16

for partially privatizing farm advisory services (see appendix on this subject in Annex 2) can be combined with the lead farmer approach and plant doctors clinics; and b) a hire/purchase scheme could be introduced so that extensionists buy their own vehicles.

Fisheries

It is difficult to demonstrate the effectiveness of long term research into aquaculture and deep-water resources which to date have been the main activities under ASWAp-SP. It may be valuable in the long term. In the meantime, effort and investment in lake capture fisheries will be more effective in a shorter timeframe, and they are thus more relevant compared to the current research activities. Among other factors, the model used in Nkhotakota by Ripple Africa to conserve fisheries is more effective and is underpinned with community bye-laws.

Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV)

Most banana growing districts are affected by the Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV). In Thyolo district alone, 100,000 farmers are severely affected by BBTV. According to Bvumbwe Research Station at the time of the MTR team's visit, each farmer is supposed to be given 50 suckers for planting in order to contain the disease. The good thing about banana plantlets is that they have a multiplier effect of more than ten times within a year. Farmers who received the 1st planting materials 7 months ago are having a lot of suckers and have started to expand their banana fields with each plant having already produced up to 10 new suckers. There is now a lot of optimism about a possible total coverage of all the needs in a few years. The MoAIWD has also put in place a control strategy based on the following components: (i) mobilization of farmers in the affected sites to create awareness about the disease and the control methods; (ii) elimination of the sources of the pathogen; (iii) distribution of clean planting materials; and (iv) promotion of integrated cropping practices around the distributed planting materials to ensure successful establishment. If this control strategy is combined with greater involvement of the private sector, specifically the capacity at Malawi Mangoes, is put in place, the MTR team believes that the timeframe for eradicating the problem could be reduced as a result of farmers taking care of the bananas and combined with the multiplication of suckers from the distributed clean planting materials and continued importation of tissue cultured bananas.

FISP Seed

ASWAp-SP has been supporting the seed component of the FISP program, especially legumes, which is achieving successful outcomes. WB review figures show that the tonnage of high quality legume seeds available to the FISP has fallen from 2,800t baseline in 2012 to 1,800t in 2016 as a result of reducing the number of beneficiaries under FISP. However, the MTR found out in the field that most farmers have increased their area under legumes using farmer-to-farmer exchange of legume seed, unlike hybrid maize seed which has to be changed every year. This is an indication that farmers are able to store legume seed for the next season, hence the sustainability of FISP interventions beyond its life is possible for open pollinated seeds such as legumes. The recycling of legume seed, together with interventions from non-ASWAp-SP DPs such as Malawi Oilseeds Sector Transformation (MOST), explain why the legume hectarage has grown despite the decrease in the quantity of legume seed under the FISP programme.

There is, however, a growing feeling among DPs, shared by the MTE team, that GoM's heavy subsidisation of the fertiliser element of FISP (which is not supported by ASWAp-SP) is too highly concentrated on the single crop maize to an extent that is not sustainable, and that the

balance should shift towards greater sustainability and crop diversity through support to conservation agriculture, improved extension, irrigation, livestock integral in the farming system, and fisheries. This is a theme that runs throughout this report, while at the same time acknowledging balanced improvements to the important maize crop. ASWAp-SP's continued involvement in FISP through the legume seeds programme has also allowed DPs to negotiate useful reforms to FISP.

Crop and Food Diversification

Research and Extension have been successful in promoting crop diversification away from over-dependence on maize for food and income and towards cassava, sweet potatoes, soya bean, and other crops like sorghum, millet and banana. Farmers not only know how to grow these crops but also how to prepare them as food. The MTR team noted that this is only one step away from confirming empirical impact from improved nutrition (which of course cannot be expected so soon). District and EPA level extension staff have a new "farm to kitchen table" approach which is effective in terms of cooking and palatability.

Agriculture Risk Management

Various market based agriculture risk management interventions have been implemented. The key ones include purchasing of a parametric insurance policy from African Risk Capacity Limited Company covering maize crop against drought in the 2015/16 season, and finalization of contract farming strategy. Both of these interventions have helped the affected farmers to cope with drought and also reduced risks associated with agriculture markets.

Two of the main indicators for food security are off track. These are: i) average maize yield at farmer level is 1.9MT/ha against a target of 2.1MT/ha; and ii) the percentage of food secure rural households is down to 61% against a target of 95%. The main contributing factors to these outcomes are the two natural disasters which are beyond the MoAIWD which are the two years of rainfall that have been well below average, while in the other parts of the country there has been the flooding problem.

Sub Component 3: Project Coordination

Project coordination has improved greatly as a result of recruitment of technical assistance staff who are able to facilitated meetings for various working groups including joint sector reviews.

Rural Roads

Rural roads are always highly relevant to link farmers to markets and services. The task here has been to assess the process of road selection for rehabilitation or upgrade in respect of roads already prioritized by the districts; this has been successful. ASWAp-SP also assisted the introduction of new technologies for road construction with the objective of lowering costs compared to conventional roads; this has also been successful. The rural roads component has improved access to markets for farmers produce. Many traders are now able to reach formerly inaccessible rural areas with improved roads and this has helped in increasing competition with farmers getting better prices for their produce. However, farmers still feel that they are not getting the right prices for their produce. There is therefore need to invest in soft areas of produce marketing such as price and market information, collective marketing, and farmer empowerment in marketing skills.

The following ASWAp-SP supported roads were reviewed in Chikwawa during the field visit:
Dolo-Thendo, 12 kms, spot improvement

Miseufolo-Therere, 20.7 kms, rehabilitation
Msangwe-Dolo, 8 kms, upgrading to tar
The three road sections mentioned above under ASWAp-SP support seem to be correctly specified because they are on black cotton soils which are generally impassable in the rainy season. This has serious consequences for farmers. The only mild criticism from the MTR team is inadequate community sensitization and involvement, which has tended to cause some conflicts between the contractor and the community especially in some roads in Nsanje. The MTR mission can confirm that the delivery of the result is progressing well.

In terms of physical progress of the road component, good progress of more than 50% has been achieved as demonstrated by the table below.

Table 3 : Physical progress of Phase 1 road projects as of June 2016[7]

Intervention	Revised Target (Km)	Contracted out (Km)	Achievement (Km)
Spot Improvements	220	206.8	184.4
Gravel rehabilitation	100	104.7	28.0
Upgrading and rehabilitation	40	42.7	5.0
Total	**360**	**354.2**	**217.4**

Environmental and social compliance of the roads component has however suffered from non -compliance in some areas especially on burrow site management and provision of adequate occupation health and safety facilities. Contractors were cautioned to improve on compliance or risk penalties.

Support to Trade and Industry

Activities that are supported aim at improving the agribusiness environment through a business reform program being implemented by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism. As a result of the support, legal framework for commodity exchanges, and warehouse receipts system are being developed. These will help in promoting structured trade and will contribute to increased market access for smallholder farmers and integration of small scale farmers into formal markets. The conducting of quarterly Public Private Dialogue Forum on topics such as payments of arrears to the private sector will give confidence to the private sector. For more analysis on the impact of the support refer to section 2.4.1.

Support to Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development

The component has supported training of staff at all levels and managed to achieve 218 staff against a target of target of 120 officers in 2015/16. The staff had been trained in land

[7] 4th Quarterly Report 2015-2016 FY -April – June 2016

administration and management; land records keeping; policy analysis and land management; project procurement; real estate; and land law in which seven staff participated in conferences related to land issues. Cumulatively, 313 staff members have been trained by the project. All these were covered in preparation for passing of the Land Bill[8]. As a result of the capacity building in the land administration, all land registry is now computerised which makes retrieving of data much easier.

The MTR team's overall conclusion for the component is that, as one would expect halfway through any development programme, overall direct real impact of ASWAp-SP in terms of reducing poverty, improving agricultural productivity and improving food security in the rural areas is yet to be fully realised, having implemented the project for only 2 years. Added to this, some components, such as livestock and fisheries, have been added to the programme only recently.

ASWAp -SP Challenges

- Though there is tremendous success on several fronts as presented above, the ASWAp-SP has had challenges as follows:

Delayed clearance for MDTF Internal Financial Reports has had negative implications on availability of funds to disburse to Cost Centres and in turn has contributed to delays in implementation of some activities.

Banana Bunchy Top disease eradication is facing problems of inadequate space in the glass house at Bvumbwe for handling of tissue culture banana seedlings. The problem limits the number of banana seedlings that can be handled.

There is now more focus on upscaling of existing proven technologies rather than generation of new technologies which has led to a decline in the number of research trials. The decline in the number of research led trials is however not compatible with the new research approach of using value chain approach continuum of research extension. The best approach is to promote a balance between technology upscaling and research because they are both important and will complement well the research extension continuum approach.

Another important challenge is that environmental safeguards are not getting fully implemented in the ADDs as there are no environmental and social management and monitoring plans available despite officers being trained on safeguard issues.

Integration of the ASWAp components also seems to be a problem as demonstrated by the reporting system of the ASWAP MDTF quarterly reports which highlight what a department has done instead of reporting progress achieved without attaching a department to it. For example, livestock could be reported under research as an activity for research and livestock will appear again under extension as an activity of extension department. The components of ASWAp seem to have been aligned to departments. The approach defeats the research extension continuum and commodity specific value chain approach for research which is a key recommendation of the Research Mapping Study under the Unallocated TA services. This research extension continuum will need to be reflected in the reporting formats.

[8] ASWAp-SP Annual Report 2015/16

Staff shortage and transport bottlenecks are derailing implementation of ASWAp-SP activities. Attempts have been made to address staff shortages through contracting out extension services to NGOs and the private sector but this is being hampered by limited number of qualified NGOs and private sector available for delivering extension services. The transport challenge for front line staff could be addressed through procurement of motor -bicycles.

The road component has been faced with numerous challenges such as reduction in funding, depreciation of the Kwacha, contractor's inconsistence performance, and delays in procurement of materials have all impacted negatively on the performance of the roads component.

2.2.3 Green Belt Initiative

The support to irrigation has integrated participation of other line ministries staff (such as Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Department of Forestry, DAES, Non-State Actors (NSAs) and the private sector.

Subcomponent 1: Support to the establishment of the Irrigation Fund (IF)

The IF is not operational. The idea for establishment of the IF was provided for the 2001 Irrigation Act. However, implementation of activities towards establishment of the fund started recently with the approval of the IF guidelines by GoM in August 2016, appointment of Board members in December 2016, and opening of the bank account. Progress has however been very slow. Effectiveness of the component is rated C.

Subcomponent 2: Development of Medium and Large Scale Irrigation schemes

a) 6 Medium Sized Grant Schemes

The six medium sized grant schemes satisfy the selection criteria for the full proposals. The development of medium scale irrigation schemes through grants was launched in September 2016, a year later than the scheduled time. Development of schemes is underway. The schemes are expected to be operational in one and a half years. Physical scheme development, WUA organization development activities, training in marketing, agribusiness skills and catchment protection activities are underway. It can be expected that this will improve farmers' access to irrigated agriculture within one to three years. But due to the delays in the procurement process additional water is actually not available for farmers. Therefore, effectiveness is rated C.

b) Bwanje Dam

The Bwanje dam is under construction and the target date for completion is January 2018. If that is achieved, irrigation water will be available in the dry season of 2018. The water will also be used for supplementary irrigation during the wet season. Effectiveness is rated C.

c) Programme Estimates (PE 1` and 2)

The PEs support the implementation of subcomponent 1 (establishment of the Irrigation Fund) and subcomponent 2 (Development of medium and large scale irrigation schemes) and enhance the administrative, technical and management capacity of DoI through capacity development for implementers at all levels (central, irrigation divisions, districts), including WUA formation and organization, DoI staff training on technical subjects, project management, leadership skills and EU procedures, and catchment management activities.

The MTR team considers the PE activities to have been necessary for the delivery of the two sub-components of the support to irrigation i.e. Irrigation Fund and development of the medium and large-scale irrigation schemes. Through the capacity development activities of the DoI staff, the staff have been able to design their own the irrigation scheme in Ntchenachena. However, due to slow progress in the delivery of the two key outputs (IF and the medium and large scale schemes), the PE' s effectiveness in facilitating the delivery of the two components is questionable. This is despite the fact that some of the reasons for not making good progress especially on the IF is related to other factors which are not under the control by the Project. Considering the PE activities realized and in progress, the effectiveness of the PEs is rated B.

d) Cross-cutting TA Services to DoI

TA to DoI has contributed to achievement of three results:

Result 1: Relevant Guidance provided for the effective mobilization and management of EU support to ASWAp & GBI - Component 2 resources and finances.

Result 2: Effective support provided to the GoM in establishing the Irrigation Fund.

Result 3: Irrigation developments facilitated through strategic technical inputs in irrigation development and management.

Management activities have been carried out to attain all three results combined.

DoI has classified the input of TA globally as good but detected some activities that were not accomplished due to TA problems.

2.2.4 Unallocated TA

The MTR Team can confirm that the various studies/initiatives that have been conducted are demand-driven and reflect the needs of GoM and the EU. The Unallocated TA has therefore been delivered successfully on various studies. In these conditions, the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the various studies are happy with the delivery of the programme results. It is for this reason that the results and recommendations of almost all the studies have been utilised for various services.

:For illustration purpose, the following studies have been achieved using the resources of the unallocated TA:

G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi, June 2016

G8 New Alliance (NA) is a useful initiative. It has helped identify 15 priority policy actions, facilitated DP funding of priority actions, and attracted private sector investments in agriculture. Based on the successful outcomes from the outgoing Facilitator, the EU is funding the new Coordinator for NA for the next two years.

On another related positive note, one of the NA performance indicators is that Malawi is making good progress in the 'Doing Business' Ranking Index. In 2016 the target ranking for Malawi was 145 but achieved 141 and is on course to be below 100 by 2022[9]. Improving score on Doing Business Ranking Index to among top 100 economies is one of the policy indicators for the NA[10].

[9] NA Annual Progress Report 2016
[10] Country Cooperation Framework for New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi.

However, the overall performance of the NA initiative is not as expected due to unforeseen factors. The contribution of the NA to poverty reduction has been negatively affected by several shocks ranging from poor weather related factors (poor rainfall, floods) to poor macro-economic management including negative publicity by the international media about the NA as a land grabbing tool. Together they have impacted negatively on the economy, which has grown by 3.1%, while the agriculture sector has contracted by 1.6%. At the micro level, environmental factors (land degradation) and lack of appropriate agribusiness human resources also negatively contribute to the underperformance of the companies. The negative publicity by the media has also contributed to some private sector companies pulling out of the NA[11].

Design of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) Seed Quality Monitoring and Testing Approach, Final Report, February 2014

The report looked at the seed system in Malawi in a holistic manner from production of basic seed to certified seed by both the private and public sector institutions. The report highlighted that the quality of seed is affected by the way it is produced at the farm, how it is stored, and the quality of seed testing equipment. It has demonstrated that maize dominates the seed system in Malawi. It's dominance on the FISP program with all the relevant associated investments crowds out investment in other traditional local seeds such as sorghum, millet and other traditional seed crops. Good recommendations have been made by the study. Some of the outputs such as regular seed testing are being used in FISP but also for all seeds in the country sold through various outlets including the agro-dealers that are now subjected to seed testing by the Seed Services Unit (SSU) at Chitedze. The unit is responsible for testing the seeds after the study revealed that the SSU seed testing results were comparable to the results from a Zimbabwean laboratory. The SSU is being supported by ASWAp–SP funds. However, the delay in approving the reviewed seed act has affected implementation of some of the recommendations, especially those involving punishment for those who cheat and sell fake seeds.

Mapping of Agriculture Research Funded Interventions in Malawi in Order to Improve Efficiency and Coordination of Technology Generation Process, August *2016*

The report looked at the whole agriculture research system in Malawi covering both public as well as private agriculture extension system. The aim of the study was to map the agricultural research organisations, funding and implementation in Malawi in order to improve research coordination. The results of the study are already being used by the EU in the formulation of the KULIMA programme and by other studies linked to research and extension like the national agriculture extension policy review.

Formulation of the 11th EDF AFIKEPO Nutrition Programme in Malawi, March 2016

AFIKEPO is "Let them *[the children]* develop to their full potential". The overall objective of AFIKEPO Nutrition Programme is to enhance nutrition security in Malawi. The study is useful in that it has provided the EU with a framework for funding nutrition interventions in the near future, probably during 2017.

Formulation of the 11th EDF KULIMA Programme in Malawi, Summary Report, August 2016.

[11]NA Annual Progress Report 2016

The programme is called Promoting Farming in Malawi (KULIMA). The study is useful in that the outputs of the study have helped in the identification of intervention areas for KULIMA program. EU is using the results to provide funding into the agriculture sector probably during 2017 through KULIMA programme.

Donor Nutrition Security Group (DoNUTS) Coordinator

The DoNUTS activity is useful in that it provides a platform for dialogue, coordination and cooperation for common approach among DPs, Government and other stakeholders on issues of nutrition. The role of the Coordinator is to provide adequate professional and technical support to the DoNUTS Chair and the other DoNUTS troika members in effectively carrying out their responsibilities and strengthening the efforts of DoNUTS to support the implementation of the sector policies and strategies.

Land Profiling Study: Converting Historical Land Resource Evaluation Data from Analogue to Digital for GIS, Final September 2016.

The study converted countrywide historical land resource evaluation data and reports of 1991 from analogue to digital format for use in GIS. The analogue reports have become user-friendly for various uses by players in the agriculture sector. Potentially, there will be possibility to use the study results to produce crop-specific recommendations for different areas for all crops in the country as the crop suitability is now available electronically. The only challenge remaining is that the 1991 data need to be updated to translate the actual situation of the soil/land properties as well as climate conditions.

2.3 SOUND MANAGEMENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY (EFFICIENCY)

The efficiency criterion concerns how well the various activities of the programme transformed the available resources into the intended results, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. For the analysis, comparison should be made against what was planned.

EU provided total funding of € 69.1 million for use over the period 2012 to 2021. Of this amount, € 64,391,642 has been used and € 4,708,358 is uncommitted. This is an important resource Malawi has lost due to last minute change in policy direction from using South Recur for irrigation development to hydropower generation. At the point the decision was being made it was too late for the program to include another scheme in the call for proposals for irrigation development grants.

The official close of operational phase of the programme is 2019, and the closure phase ends in 2021.Progress towards achieving the intended results is not as satisfactory as one would wish mainly due to the one-year delay in the implementation of the grants facility for the GBI. Grant contracts which should have been signed in September 2015 have been signed in September 2016 due to back and forth movements in following EU procedures and also the delay in preparation of detailed designs of irrigation schemes from RIDP II; the grants Call for Proposals could not be launched before the detailed designs were ready.

The Unallocated TA activities have been completed with speed with all the allocated funds contracted. Some of the unallocated TA activities are still going on and are expected to end by October 2018.

ASWAp-SP support is expected to end by 6 June 2017 but there are indications that it will be extended to 2020 if MDTF donors agree. All the allocated funding for ASWAp-SP by the EU has been committed to the MDTF.

Support to the Irrigation Component (GBI) was allocated € 35,100,000 of which € 30,3891,642 has been used up and € 4,708,358 (>10%) is unused and forms part of the resources which Malawi has lost due to delays in committing the funds.

Funding modality could be the main contributing factor to explain why Unallocated TA and ASWAp-SP have all their allocations contracted while GBI has some funds uncommitted. This represents a classical example of how inefficient the program has been. Unallocated TA is managed wholly by the EU, and ASWAp-SP is managed by WB through the Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF). GBI Component contracting authority is the NAO but day-to-day management is delegated to DoI.

Under ASWAp-SP with the MDTF funding structure, inter-ministerial coordination has greatly improved with the inclusion of funding for Trade activities, and Roads and Lands activities.

The programme has however performed poorly in promoting integration of the two components (GBI and ASWAp-SP but also Unallocated TA). Though they are all funded by the same EU financing agreement, effort for integration of the two components has been minimal. This lack of integration can be linked to the fact that the design of the program did not provide for integration since each component was to be management by different structures e,g. ASWAp-SP management is through the MDTF, GBI through DOI while Unallocated TA through the EU. The setup of the Unallocated TA was that it would take care of adhoc needs by Government or other stakeholder which were not originally planned/budgeted for in the ASWAp-SP and GBI but the views of the MTR are that since those adhoc activities were to be demand driven activities from ASWAp-SP, they should have therefore been given room to be reported under ASWAp-SP or GBI depending on what the activity was supporting. This has been absent, but the MTR team has noted that some of the outputs from the Unallocated TA are getting utilised by the ASWAp-SP such as the results of the FISP Seed Quality Monitoring Study. One would however understand the situation that may be the reporting under ASWAp-SP is based on tracking the outputs to expenditures of budget lines under ASWAp-SP but sure there should have been room for reporting other activities implemented in support of ASWAp-SP.

ASWAp-SP has been able to leverage participation of the private sector in FISP through a business related relationship for the supply of legume seeds and while NGOs have been involved in the provision of extension services through Find Your Feet. The story of Find Your Feet, in delivery of extension services has so far been a success story.

Unallocated TA through the New Alliance for Food Security has tried to bring in the private sector into the agriculture sector through letters of intent to invest in the sector while Government has made commitment to improve the policy environment. Development Partners have also made commitments to assist Government to implement policy commitments in order to attract private sector investment to the sector.

The programme's performance under the efficiency criteria is moderate with the loss of over € 4 million of uncommitted funds. On component by component, Unallocated TA efficiency has been good because its activities are demand-driven and most of its outputs have been used for developing other programs or improving implementation of ASWAp-SP and GBI. GBI efficiency is poor because of the uncommitted funds, which Malawi has lost, and also farmers

have lost one year of benefits. ASWAp-SP performance on efficiency is moderate, because it has been able to push good innovations for implementation.

The next paragraphs present the findings on programme efficiency for each of the two main components plus the Unallocated TA.

2.3.1 ASWAp-SP

The information collected from WB indicated that up to November 2016, the ASWAp-SP has received an amount of about US$ 61 million out of the allocated amount of US$100 million. It is important to indicate that EU has already paid the totality of its contribution to the World Bank, as Administrator of the MDTF. The majority of this funding (80%) has been used under Sustainable Food Security and Agriculture Growth Divers component of which Sustainable Productivity Growth Initiative (including the support to the FISP seed component) took up 77% of the funding. The component crowded out investments in market based risk management, legume production and marketing and promotion of Public Private Partnerships (Table 3). Sustainable Productivity Growth Initiative supports the Farm Inputs Subsidy Program (FISP) legume seed component.

Table 4 Cumulative ASWAp-SP Expenditure (April 2014 – September 2016)

Cash Receipts	USD	% Usage by Component
Source of Funding World Bank	60,976,477.00	
Less: Use of Funds by Component		
1.0 Institutional Development and Capacity Building	5551408.59	10%
1.1 ASWAP Management and Coordination Support	511388.55	1%
1.2 Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Support	3235774.91	6%
1.3 Technical Systems Development	145435.30	0%
1.4 Administration Systems Development	1658809.82	3%
1.5 Land Administration	0.00	0%
2.0 Sustainable Food Security & Agric Growth Divers	43618222.45	80%
2.1 Sustainable Productivity Growth Initiative	41843716.04	77%
2.2 Strengthening Market Based Agric Risk Mngmt	1063050.24	2%
2.3 Promotion of Legume Production and Marketing	304920.80	1%
2.4 Promotion of Agribusiness through PPPs	406535.37	1%
3.0 Project Coordination	**4385039.29**	**8%**
4.0 Rural Roads	**694593.26**	**1%**
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE	54249263.59	100%

Source MDTF IFR September 2016

Although there has been excellent capacity building at district level of the hierarchy of farmer-based organizations in the form of DAESS structures, e.g. in Rumphi, in some districts they are not functioning properly. The success stories recorded in Rumphi district are explained by factors such as: (i) high literacy levels; (ii) strong commitment from the DADO; (iii) the joint planning between DADO and all the active stakeholders in the district; and (iv) the stakeholders' strong commitment and their capacity to have their own resources maintained in a bank account for the stakeholders which is operational in the district. The MTR team proposes a detailed study to determine how these success factors could be replicated and applied in other districts.

There is also a need for greater emphasis on frontline training; furthermore, this needs to be more practical. Not only is this justified *per se*, it will also contribute to attracting more applicants to vacant posts. NRC training is expensive and few want to incur this expense and then apply for an unattractive job as an AEDO - a mismatch. In the same vein, Malawi Mangoes, which is trying to expand to meet market demand, needs more students to mentor for possible future employment; an efficient model, this demonstrates that bringing the private sector more into the ASWAp embrace will lead to more, and more varied, employment opportunities.

AEDO to farmer ratio is 2500 and decreasing slightly. Average vacancy rate is 32% and increasing, but of AEDOs, the frontline staff, it is 46% (2014/15) down from nearly 70% just two years earlier; among more senior professional officers it was 55% (2014/15). The overall story that these and similar figures tell is that there has been limited progress in reducing the overall vacancy rate; even though MoAIWD has recruited 200 AEDOs within the last six months, the situation is chronic and is not going to change fundamentally. Even if GoM could afford to: a) remove the current partial block on recruitment (replacement of retirees or filling of new vacancies is permissible, but filling old vacancies is not); and b) to improve living and working conditions for frontline staff; these two together would still not meet the challenge. Something much more radical is needed (see section 3.2.1. Extension, and section 6.2. Recommendations, below).

A Core Function Analysis of MoAIWD, funded under ASWAp-SP was concluded in July 2016. It has identified functions, which are core and non-core for the MoAIWD. The good thing about the report is that the Public reform committee will use it when instituting reforms for the Ministry of agriculture. The reforms are expected to improve the performance of the public services and the performance of the agriculture sector.

The Agriculture Sector Working Group (ASWG) meetings were reported to have improved, but the recent WB review noted the failure by the Ministry to hold both the Joint Sector Review (JSR) and the ASWG meetings during the period. The Technical Working Groups (TWGs) are also reported to be not very active, though the Commercial Working Group is an exception. Certain recommendations in this report will need to be considered by the ASWG as well as the TWGs.

The silo approach of ministry departments, already mentioned, manifested by poor knowledge sharing between various departments also contributes to poor and less-than-fully-effective service delivery. Advantage is not being fully taken of knowledge sharing platforms like the DAEC, which exist at the decentralized level but are not replicated at the central level within the Ministry resulting in conflicting messages and information dissemination on the ground. ASWAp, in which departments are expected to report at Technical Working Group level and then at Sector Working Group level is also not working well. Work processes of various departments need to be more integrated and more complementary to each other.

All this is reported well and emphatically in the WB six monthly Reviews and in the Core Function Analysis of MoAIWD, but this did not really fully impact on the MTR team's consciousness until the team visited Thyolo district and saw the disconnect between DARS and DAES in relation to BBTV. Furthermore, the conflict, only narrowly avoided, between Crops Department and DARS over which one, or both, should import banana suckers could have made the current bad situation even worse.

2.3.2 Support to Irrigation

The GBI component is wholly financed by the EU in its attempt to support Irrigation development in Malawi. For this component, the support is provided through the MoAIWD, DoI (Department of Irrigation). The GBI Component contracting authority is the NAO but day-to-day management is delegated to DoI.

Support to the Irrigation Component (GBI) was allocated € 35,100,000 of which an amount of €30,391,642 has been committed and €4,708,358 has not been committed. Implementation was delayed by one year. Grant contracts, which should have been signed in September 2015, were signed in September 2016. Delay in programme implementation was due to a combination of factors such as delayed preparation of detailed designs under RIDP II; and the time-consuming forward and backward communication and decision making processes between EUD, NAO-SU and DoI during planning, proposal writing, reviewing submission and resubmissions, negotiations, approvals etc. Calls for proposals could not be launched before the detailed designs were ready. The period between the launch of proposals for the grant schemes and the date of signing contract was long (15-16 months) and summing this with the expected period to deliver the irrigation water to the schemes (8 to 18 months), means it will take 2 to 3 years (23 to 34 months) before the beneficiaries could benefit from the irrigation scheme taking into account that cropping is expected soon after completion and growing period is two to four months means finally the beneficiaries will enjoy the benefits of the project in 25 to 38 months. The component has also not been able to commit all the resources it was allocated. Support to the Irrigation Component (GBI) was allocated €35,100,000 of which €30,391,642 has been committed, leaving a balance of € 4,708,358 uncommitted. The dropping out of South Rukuru, due to a last minute change of Government priority from using South Rukuru for Irrigation Development to hydro power generation meant that some resources could not be committed for irrigation. It should however be noted that South Rukuru was not a grant scheme but a works scheme.

Subcomponent 1: Support to the establishment of the Irrigation Fund (IF)

The creation of the IF was defined in the Irrigation Act (2001) but till now few activities have been undertaken for it to be operational. The IF guidelines were approved in August 2016 by the Secretary to the Treasury. The IF board was appointed in December 2016. Progress to establish the IF has been very slow.

Subcomponent 2: Development of Medium and Large Scale Irrigation schemes

Development of 6 medium sized systems

Grants have been conceded for the development of the six medium sized irrigation schemes. A long period of 15 to 16 months between launching a call of proposals (30-04-2015) and dates of signing contracts by GoM (July-August 2016) are identified. The delays in the signing of the grant contracts was partly due to the fact that the ASWAp-SP-GBI Financing Agreement was signed prematurely hence some activities could not be done in time, such as detailed designs were not ready for some schemes. Moreover, in three of the six projects, detailed designs were already made in the framework of RIDP II, which means that the whole process of participatory design was already done. So, tendering (of Works, Supervision of Works, and soft services such as community support, agribusiness, WUA, catchment protection) and implementation could have been started shortly after the approval of these detailed designs. Now there was a duplication of work in the elaboration of the full proposals.

Development of Bwanje large scale irrigation scheme and dam

A period of about 18 months between the approval of the detailed dam design (February 2015) and the start of construction (September 2016) has been verified. Delays in the tender procedures are principally due to the time-consuming communication and decision processes between EUD, NAO-SU and DoI, in which each (technical) step needs the endorsement of the NAO-SU.

The dam is expected to be operational in January 2018. Works Supervision is contracted by DoI to be permanent during construction.

Subcomponent 3: Programme Estimates (PE1 and PE2)

PE activities are diversified, very numerous, and procedurally complex to implement, particularly regarding the procurement process. Implementation is managed through a 3-layered structure consisting of two ministries and the EUD. This complex setup is sufficient reason for explaining partial and slower results. All reports, even of a technical nature, need the endorsement of the NAO-SU, which is an important factor for delays in implementation.

The initial 12 months' period of PE1 was extended by four months to improve budget utilization considering that there were delays in the implementation of planned activities, principally due to delayed guidance from Treasury on establishment of the IF, delayed launch of a Call for Proposals and delayed formation and development of WUA. Budget restrictions in PE1 were found necessary, as there were problems in implementing some of the planned activities. The total expenditure over the entire PE1 period of 16 months represents 70% rate of expenditure of the total local imprest budget. The total amount spent on improving farmers access to irrigated agriculture during PE1 represents 99.5% rate of total expenditure and a physical progress of around 85%. PE2, had about €397,000 unspent in August 2016, representing an absorption rate of 27%. The PE2 disbursement rate may have been limited by the uncertainty on DAES's (Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development) and the Department of Forestry's (Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining) commitment, respectively on activities to enhance farmers' capacity in agribusiness/value chain aspects and to facilitate catchment protection/management activities. This is due to the fact that both DAES and Department of Forestry prioritise implementation of their own established programmes. Requests from DoI to contribute to the above-mentioned activities, is considered as an add-on activity.

Cross-cutting AGRER-TA

TA is efficient but could be improved if the communication and decision processes and procedures between DoI, NAO-SU and EUD could be streamlined and speeded up

2.3.3 Unallocated TA

The governance structure of the Unallocated TA used direct central management by the EU upon identification of the need by either Government, EU and any other stakeholder active in the agriculture sector. Services contract were used for implementation of each study done. Eight studies/initiatives have been implemented and the majority of them have been completed successfully and a few of them are still going on (Table 2).

A total of € 1,500,000 was budgeted for the unallocated TA. All the funds have been committed, with € 1,378,043 used and the only remaining amount of € 121,957 is a balance to pay the balances of the various running contracts for which advances had been made.

Generally, the performance of the component is good with an overall rating of B, and there has been largely positive feedback from stakeholders through interviews. The activities funded are all useful. Most of the studies have been completed Table 4 show that the majority of the studies ended in December 2016.

Table 5. Status of Implementation of Unallocated TA Studies

	Study Name	2013				2014				2016				2018				Status
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
1	Design of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 FISP Seed Study			Start Date	End Date		Closing Date											Closed
2	Facilitator for the G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition								Start Date		End Date							Ongoing
3	Formulation of the 11th EDF AFIKEPO Program									Start Date			End Date					Ongoing
4	Formulation of the 11th EDF KULIMA Programme										Start Date		End Date					Ongoing
5	Agriculture research mapping Study										Start Date		End Date					Closed
6	Land Profiling Study: Converting Analogue Data to Digital Data										Start Date		End Date					Ongoing
7	Coordinator of the New Alliance & Food Security												Start Date				End Date	Ongoing
8	Donor Nutrition Security Group												Start Date				End Date	Ongoing

**Derived from CRIS Financial Report: 09/11/2016*

- The facilitator for New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition closed in June 2016
- The new coordinator for New Alliance for Food Security reported for duties in November 2016.
- The terms of reference for the new Coordinator for Food Security and Nutrition are also available as part of the evidence that the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition is still active through the engagement of the Coordinator after the expiry of the contract for the Facilitator in June 2016.
- Formulation of the 11th EDF AFIKEPO programme is being done in two phases. The first phase was completed in April 2016 and the second phase started in September 2016 and was expected to end December 2016.
- Formulation of KULIMA started in April 2016 and phase one ended in June 2016 and phase 2 is running up to end January 2017.

In general, most activities were completed in a timely manner. Two activities (New Alliance for Food Security and DONUTs Group) are still being implemented and will run up to the end of 2018.

Justifications of the costs in implementing the 8 studies

The overall objective of the EU support to ASWAp-SP and GBI is to contribute to the Malawi Government' objective of poverty reduction. Through the Unallocated TA, Government has been able to commit itself in addressing the 15 policy commitments aimed at creating a favourable environment for private sector investments and for development partners to provide funding for implementation of the policy commitments and for private sector to investment in agriculture. As a result of these commitments through the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, 29 private sector companies (section 3.3) in 2013 signed letters of intent to invest in agriculture and the majority of them have indeed invested in agriculture using inclusive and sustainable models in which smallholder farmers have access to services (about 1.5 million smallholder farmers have been reached), and other community members have benefited through employment (8,816 new jobs created) and increased market access to smallholder farmers for over US$ 8 million of agriculture commodities produced or procured, thereby contributing to reducing poverty.

Through the AFIKEPO and KULIMA Formulation Studies, the EU has committed to fund the outputs from these two studies in the form of an AFIKEPO nutrition programme and KULIMA Sustainable Agriculture Program, which will be aimed at improving nutrition standards in the country and improving agriculture production and productivity with the aim of reducing poverty.

The 2013/14 and 2014/15 FISP Seed Quality Study, the Agriculture Research Mapping and the Land Profiling Study results are also aimed at contributing to improving agriculture productivity and production.

The DoNUTS Coordinator study is aimed at improving coordination of nutrition activities thereby contributing to a healthy population.

The above benefits therefore more than justify the costs incurred in the implementation of the Unallocated TA Services.

2.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF WIDER EFFECTS (IMPACT)

The term impact denotes the relationship between the programme specific and overall objectives.

2.4.1 ASWAp-SP

As one would expect halfway through any development programme, overall direct real impact of ASWAp-SP in terms of reducing poverty, improving agricultural productivity and improving food security in rural areas is yet to be fully realised. Added to this, some components, such as livestock and fisheries, have been added to the programme only recently. Two of the main indicators for food security are off track. These are: i) average maize yield at farmer level is 1.9MT/ha against a target of 2.1MT/ha; and ii) the percentage of food secure rural household is down to 61% against a target of 95%[12]. But the background to these two figures is two years of rainfall that has been well below average, as well as floods, so they are understandable.

Although training, institutional development and capacity building are expensive, they represent excellent value for money in terms of impact and outcomes. District staff at DADO

[12] World Bank Aide Memoire June 2016

level and below is a case in point: further investment in their training will have a big impact on ASWAp outcomes.

The programme has helped the institution to review the curriculum because stakeholders have noted that the current curriculum does not provide what is required by clients outside.

In response to concerns by some DPs, catchment conservation WB indicator figures[13], derived from MoAIWD, were investigated by the MTR team, which now believes that they give a false picture. MoAIWD CA area figures are for what may loosely be termed "CA Light", not for "CA Classic". "CA Light" usually means only one of the three CA principles has been adopted, rarely two of the three, and usually that is minimal soil disturbance, more rarely a mulch. Moreover, when a mulch is used it is often of grass taken from somewhere else in the catchment. All DADOs were asked the same question about CA Classic and CA Light, and most said the former was 10% of the figures that were later consolidated by MoAIWD, and the latter was 90%. One said 15% and 85%. To be fair to the DADOs, and in particular to the Conservation Officers, some did collect and report the raw data in accordance with the Reporting Template in the National Guidelines for Implementing CA, April 2016, on a monthly basis, where the data are differentiated into the three principles, and disaggregated by gender, etc. but these reports seem to have been consolidated when preparing the quarterly reports, and this is what was later submitted to WB by MoAIWD.

WB cannot be expected to have the in-house expertise, or even seconded or co-opted specialists, to monitor data of this complexity. The same complexity exists with extension, and with fisheries. It is recommended that a specialized firm or NGO is contracted by WB using MDTF money for the M&E function on a regular visiting, not full time, basis. This arrangement is common practice with the EU, DfID and indeed WB. This recommendation applies to these three sub-sectors – catchment conservation, extension, and fisheries. This recommendation does not replace, but complements existing government M&E systems, which have been successfully supported by ASWAp-SP.

Fisheries

Wider, bigger and quicker impact can be achieved with greater emphasis on rights-based lake capture fisheries, while continuing with current ASWAp-SP activities into longer term research into aquaculture, deep water lake resources, etc.

Once again, as already mentioned under section 3.2.2.d) second paragraph above, to achieve greater impact there is a need for improved M&E through strengthening the existing M&E units in Planning Division of the Ministry and all stakeholders involved in collecting data.

In the Inception Workshop, the Director of Fisheries recommended that the MTR team should visit Ripple Africa[14] in Nkhata Bay, which it did[15]. There were two main conclusions at both technical and organizational levels. On the technical side, fish resources are dwindling rapidly because of illegal fishing and use of restricted fishing gear such as small net mesh sizes, including mosquito nets. Thus, few fish reach breeding maturity. Even when they do,

[13] World Bank Results Framework
[14] www.rippleafrica.com
[15] A formal comment has been received that since capture fisheries are not part of ASWAp-SP, the MTR team should not have reviewed it. While we accept the first part of this comment, we do not agree with the second part. The ToRs for this consultancy include Relevance, and we consider lake capture fisheries to be more immediately relevant than fish farming.

exploitation of small fry, again with mosquito nets, further damages any chance of sustainability of the fisheries. Breeding areas are not protected. It is a classic case of the tragedy of the commons. Now, arguably because of project support which has helped the DoF to enforce the regulations, all this can be, and has been reversed; first in Nkhata Bay and now beginning in Nkhotakota, a total of 200 kms of shoreline. The problem with the DoF is that it has problems of capacity and resources.

On the organizational side, arguably the difficult bit, Ripple Africa has sensitized and educated lakeshore fishing communities on the technical side of the problem and on what needs to be done to correct it. A hierarchy of community organisations has been strengthened, (in a similar way to that described above under 3.1.a) [the Rumphi model]). This had been done before with GTZ assistance in the establishment of Beach Village Committees, but the difference here is that these committees are now empowered with bye-laws with the backing of the district authorities and the Department of Fisheries. Thus, fishing communities are empowered to scout for infringements, seize (with help from DoF and the district authorities) illegal fishing equipment, designate and protect breeding areas, and expel itinerant fisher folk. The results have been positive and dramatic in terms of the average size of fish caught, and in the total fish landed. According to Ripple Africa monitoring staff, whereas two years previously a typical fishing trip might have yielded five fish of 120mm, now it yields 50 fish of 320mm. Two main species are principally affected, chambo and usipa.

All this has delivered a strong impact in terms of a community spirit of collective ownership and responsibility, increased cash incomes for fishing families, a stronger and more sustainable value chain, and particularly women's employment. The potential is much greater: 1) bringing the whole of the lake's shoreline under such management is within reach, from the successful pilot, to 200 kms already beginning, to perhaps three times the straight-line length of the lake of 580 kms; 2) reduced national imports of fish which is currently an estimated 160,000t in 2016 to meet market demand of 300,000t (and rising) while only 140,000t is landed domestically. The DoF is however not doing much because it is constrained on resources

Rural roads impact has been good, linking farmers to markets and services in all seasons. An impact study shows many benefits, including increased farm gate prices. The rural roads component has improved access to markets for farmers produce. Many traders are now able to reach the rural areas with improved roads and this has helped in increasing competition with farmers getting better prices for their produce. However, farmers still feel that they are not getting the right prices for their produce. There is therefore need to invest in soft areas of produce marketing such as price and market information, collective marketing, and farmer empowerment in marketing skills. On the other hand, the MoAIWD is implementing Farmer Business Schools (FBSs) in some areas. The FBSs help in improving the understanding of farmers on farming as a business but the MTR team did not have a chance of visiting one.

Road building of all types is all about drainage in Malawi, and this can be negated by excessive catchment run-off, which can ruin the best made road. Linkages between catchment conservation and road building therefore need to be strengthened.

Support to Trade and Industry

The support has covered broad areas related to creating an enabling environment for doing business in Malawi with the aim of improving the agribusiness environment and development of partnerships for private investment in agriculture, integration into value chains and

participation in regional markets in order to promote a more commercially oriented agriculture. The overall impact of the activity is that together with other initiatives such as the New Alliance for Food Security, the Doing Business Ranking for Malawi has improved in 2016 from 145 to 141.

Another impact of the support on the agricultural sector is that after launching the collateral registry system, tobacco companies are using the Registry more than financial institutions. Tobacco companies have been registering farmers' stop orders on the Registry. It is also expected that as the commodity exchanges and the warehouse receipts systems grow, especially with an improvement in the regulatory framework, more agricultural entities will use the Registry to extend credit to smallholder farmers[16].

2.4.2 Green Belt Initiative

Despite the high costs of support to GBI, benefits in terms of increased production have still not been generated. However, benefits could be expected gradually in one year's time onwards when the physical infrastructure will be constructed and irrigation water will become available for agricultural production. Also, the activities linked with the creation of strong WUAs, development of agribusiness, and catchment protection are all expected to generate benefits.

Subcomponent 1: Support to the establishment of the Irrigation Fund (IF)

There has been very slow progress on the delivery of results. The Guidelines were approved in August 2016, the Board was appointed in December 2016 and the bank account was also opened recently, but no impact has been realised which can be attributed to IF.

Subcomponent 2: Development of Medium and Large Scale Irrigation schemes

Processes towards the development of irrigation schemes have started implementation since the signing of the grant contracts in September 2016. Activities linked with the creation of strong WUAs, development of agribusiness and catchment protection are expected to generate positive impact. There is, however, a risk that the existing cooperatives at Bwanje and Lifuwu Irrigation schemes could not be revitalized because of complete mistrust of the farmers due to historical mismanagement issues. It might therefore not be sufficient to just provide new training in agri-business only. Also needed are: identification of constraints to group cohesion, marketing and credit mechanisms, processing etc.

Lastly the impact of the sub component has not been verified at this stage because irrigation development activities commenced recently. Positive impact could be expected when the physical infrastructure will be constructed and irrigation water will become available for agricultural production. Expected positive impacts include: more food security, higher production and yields, higher incomes, and improvements in catchment protection.

Programme Estimates (PE1 and PE2)

Training activities of DoI staff have strengthened the quality of irrigation scheme development and the creation of own capacity in DoI to develop the irrigation schemes using internal capacity after the end of the EU support. A good example of the impact of the trainings is the

[16] ASWAp-SP Ammual Report 2015/16

detailed design of the modernization and extension of the Ntchenachena irrigation scheme in Rumphi district and Zombe Irrigation Scheme in Mzimba district. The Zombe Irrigation Scheme is understudying zig zag furrow irrigation and it seems to be yielding good results. Farmers indicated that zig-zag furrows have reduced labour input in field irrigation and diminished erosion of the furrows.

Cross-cutting AGRER-TA

Training activities have enhanced the capacity of DoI staff in management of EU procedures for implementation of PEs, Grants and contracts; helped develop DOI staff competences in irrigation development, which has helped strengthen capacity of DoI to deliver better irrigation services – the case of Nchenachena and Zombe Irrigation Schemes.

2.4.3 Unallocated TA

The Unallocated TA[17] intended purpose is to support smooth implementation of ASWAp-SP and GBI. At the macro level nine out of 25 companies which signed Letters of Intent (LoIs) have continued investing in agriculture thereby improving access to improved seeds by smallholder farmers, increasing agro-processing, agriculture diversification; and increasing market access for smallholders.

The outputs from AFIKEPO and KULIMA Formulation Studies are already in the process of developing into fundable projects by the EU, the outputs of the 2013/14 FISP Seed Quality Study are also already being used for seed testing in the country by the Seed Services Unit of the MoAIWD while the Agriculture Research Mapping outputs have also fed into the KULIMA formulation. For the Land Profiling Study, results are expected to be used to produce area specific crop suitability maps over the 8 ADDs of Malawi. Finally, the DoNUTS Coordinator initiative will contribute to having a healthy population in the country through the overall improvement of nutrition in the country.

2.5 LIKELY CONTINUATION OF ACHIEVED RESULTS (SUSTAINABILITY)

The sustainability criterion relates to whether the positive outcomes of the programme and the flow of benefits are likely to continue after the end of the EU support.

2.5.1 ASWAp-SP

The Core Function Analysis report approved by the Ministry recently is a good starting point for reform. The CFA mandate was to identify core functions for the Ministry. It should however be noted that the private sector will not take up activities that are public in nature hence in the short to medium term the government will continue to deliver those roles. In addition, although there are NGOs that could in theory deliver some roles, their capacities vary depending on the funding they have. At the same time GoM should also be building capacity to carry out core government functions. Also where both the private sector and NGOs fail, then GoM should be able to step in. Implementation of the CFA results/recommendations is therefore a key sustainability strategy for ASWAp-SP benefits.

[17] The Unallocated TA is a flexible resource which is available to support *ad hoc* needs and different studies judged necessary by the GoM in support of agriculture development but were not envisaged at the time of developing ASWAp-SP work plans and budgets.

Institutional development and capacity building in support of ASWAp are not yet sustainable because they are unbalanced in favour of formal training when there should be greater emphasis on field level practical training for frontline staff.

Research. Potential for sustainability of research activities is high because of the recommendation from the Mapping of Agriculture Research Technologies for research to change the way research is being conducted by using the research-extension continuum approach. This will allow more connection of research to extension and to end users who are farmers, and the process will guarantee sustainability of research activities.

Extension. Currently unsustainable but solid foundations for extension delivery through use of lead farmer approach which is making dissemination of technology cost effective and leading to increased yields, use of plant doctors which is reducing the plant health problems leading to reduced crop yield losses, and use of NGOs to provide extension service are all efforts which will lead to sustainability of extension services. All these approaches are aimed at addressing the problem of high extension worker to farmer worker which is currently at 1 extension worker to between 1800-2514 farmers[18].

BBTV. The current pace of intervention on BBTV guarantees sustainability of the intervention and eventually complete eradication of BBTV. This will be achieved through use of a combination of strategies which the ministry has put in place which includes, harmonisation of BBTV activities between DARS and DCD to avoid duplication, total destruction of diseased plants through Farmer Mobilisation for destruction of existing banana mats, sourcing of clean planting materials involving initial importation of tissue cultured plantlets some of which have already been distributed to farmers and in turn those plantlets have already each produced more than 10 suckers and farmers are using them to expand their banana fields. Plans have also been put in place to start producing clean plantlets using tissue culture at Bvumbwe, Lunyangwa and LUANAR.; and undertake large scale distribution of banana suckers.

Catchment conservation. Sustainability of catchment conservation is an issue which is worrying. Evidence so far suggest that most farmers are not adopting catchment conservation because it does not give immediate benefits to farmers while at the same time it is labour demanding which tends to be a costly intervention to farmers. However, it would be interesting to conduct a further analysis to understand why farmers are not adopting .

Fisheries

According to Department of Fisheries (DoF), the 140,000t currently landed is in danger of suffering catastrophic collapse along the huge majority of lake shoreline that is not currently protected by the Ripple Africa model unless this community based sustainable and environmentally sound approach is not adopted soon. Current practices are far from being sustainable.

Again, although interventions in lake capture fisheries should be coordinated by the DoF and based on solid community involvement strengthened by district authorities and bye-laws, to be fully sustainable, adherence to the technical and organizational discipline that has been

[18] Proceedings of MaFAAS Malawi Extension Strategy Input Workshop, 24 March 2016, Malawi Institute of Management.

carefully developed needs to be monitored independently on a continuing but intermittent basis. This principle has already been described and recommended under Extension and Catchment Conservation. It is something that should be supported by ASWAp-SP.

Until ASWAp embraces its original all-inclusive sector wide mandate in spirit and in action the Approach will not be sustainable. This is likely to be best achieved through strengthening district level institutions and through accelerating decentralization.

2.5.2 GBI

The integrated approach to irrigation development is a major sustainability tool for irrigation development. This combined with the Irrigation Fund when it becomes fully operational will guarantee sustainability of irrigation activities because the IF will be there to support funding for development of new schemes while the integrated approach to irrigation development will ensure sustainability of the developed irrigation schemes beyond project life.

Sustainability of the irrigation schemes could also be improved if nucleus and out grower commercial models similar to Phata Irrigation Scheme could be encouraged and adopted alongside a dedicated buyer of commercial irrigated crops.

2.5.3 Unallocated TA

Sustainability here is looking at sustainability of the outputs from the various studies and initiatives funded by unallocated TA resources rather than sustainability in terms of EU financial resources which were used to fund Unallocated TA.

Sustainability of the outputs from the various studies/initiatives of Unallocated TA is good because all the studies/initiatives, which were funded were demand driven based on need to immediately use the results. As has already been elaborated in section 2.4.3. The GoM and donors through the MTDF has also mainstreamed some of the results of the unallocated TA activities through its ASWAp-SP budget by funding among others the Seed Services Unit at Chitedze to conduct seed quality testing throughout the country as a result of the FISP seed quality study.

2.6 MUTUAL REINFORCEMENT (COHERENCE)

2.6.1 ASWAp-SP

ASWAp-SP demonstrates that DPs coordinated together can make a difference. The programme now has more coherence compared to when each donor was doing its own investments. There is now better coordination than ever before using pool funding and because ASWAp-SP has put in appropriate management systems. In the past, funding was at the discretion of individual DPs.

2.6.2 Green Belt Initiative

Several on-going EU funded programmes are complementary to GBI, Malawi's policies and other Development Partners' interventions. The EU has provided funding under the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) through the Planning for Climate Change (PCC) to contribute to Malawi's climate change mainstreaming efforts in line with the country's National Climate Change Strategy. Under the EU-funded Farm Income Diversification Programme (FIDP), agri-business is promoted by changing the smallholders' perception of farming as a means of subsistence to consider farming as a business activity. This is complementary to the agribusiness activities in the GBI framework.

Many interventions of other DPs (World Bank, AfDB, BADEA, JICA, and IFAD) are taking place in the irrigation sector of Malawi. Programmes and activities are in line with the objective of the GBI to increase agricultural productivity and food security by means of irrigation development. They are not in conflict with each other but rather complement each other. These interventions do not contradict EU policies and are in line with the strategies of the EU in the sense that they also have, although with different degrees of emphasis, an integrated approach to irrigation development through WUA strengthening, catchment protection and agribusiness development.

2.6.3 Unallocated TA

The various studies funded by the Unallocated TA component are coherent with numerous on-going activities by the GoM including MoAIWD, private sector DP including the EU, DoNUTs. For example, the New Alliance (NA) activities are coherent with private sector companies such as Malawi Mangoes, Illovo, Seed Co., etc. GoM ministries and departments responsible for the 15 policy commitments and DP supporting NA[19]. DoNUTs activities are coherent with the TROIKA, various DP and projects supporting nutrition, and Department of HIV/Aids among others[20]. In short, the MTR Team confirms that all 9 studies done under the component are coherent with many on-going projects, NGOs, private sector and DPs.

2.7 EU VALUE ADDED/COMPLEMENTARITY OF EU SUPPORT WITH OTHER DPs

2.7.1 ASWAp-SP

The ASWAp-SP is more complementary to other DP activities such as to the Government of Flanders and GIZ. Government of Flanders, for example, has provided substantial direct support to traditional farm extension.

There are several NGOs from EU member states such as World Vision UK, German Agro-Action, Ripple Africa UK, and Concern (Ireland) which are also supporting agriculture development and as such complement ASWAp-SP activities.

Ripple Africa is a UK-based charity. It originally claimed no particular expertise in fisheries, but it does have valuable community organizational skills to protect fish in the lake and allow for regulated fishing. Those organizational approaches are entirely compatible with what is also happening under the so-called Rumphi Extension models.

2.7.2 GBI

GBI component complements on-going several current irrigation development activities being implemented by various development partners such as African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank (WB), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the European Union, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

2.7.3 Unallocated TA

Unallocated TA also complements the efforts being made by various stakeholders to reduce poverty, hunger, and malnutrition through the development of agriculture especially increasing production, productivity and diversification away from traditional export and food crops.

[19]For more details refer to the New Alliance Annual report 2016, New Alliance Compact 2015
[20]For more details refer to the DoNUTs ToR 2016

Specifically, the component complements the activities of the Ministry of Trade Industry and Private Sector (TIP) Sector Wide Approach working group on oilseeds especially through the NA activities; the MoAIWD; the private sector especially those who signed letters of intent with the NA to invest in agriculture, DCAFs, DoNUTS including various nutrition projects (mentioned in the Torso for DoNUTS Coordinator); and Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) for ASWAp-SP

2.8 VISIBILITY

Signboards for GBI component have been identified in all targeted irrigation schemes that were visited by the MTR team. In addition, T-Shirts, golf shirts, hats, roll-up banners, calendars, and diaries were produced by GBI as part of the visibility. For ASWAp-SP visibility 5,000 calendars and 2,000 diaries were distributed and 4 ASWAp-SP banners were installed in Blantyre, Zomba, Lilongwe and Mzuzu.

Visibility could be improved it the strategy also includes use of mass media tools such as production of documentaries for airing on television and radio; and use of print media such as newspapers and newsletters.

2.9 OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Programme performance has been rated grades of between B-C in line with the EU Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) methodology. Overall performance is rated B because the programme has performed well on most of its components with B for Relevance, Efficiency, and Effectiveness. Impact and Sustainability have been rated C because on most components, especially GBI, Impact is yet to be realised but, since there are still two years before closure of operational phase, the expectation is that a lot more will have been done which will swing the grades to a much better position. Table 5 below provides more details on the ratings for the overall programme and also its related components, while Annex 1 contains explanatory notes for the rating.

Table 6 Summary Evaluation Score Matrix for Unallocated TA ASWAp-SP and GBI[21]

A/Blue: Very good; B/Green: Good; C/Orange: Problems; D/Red: Serious deficiencies

The overall scoring for the programme was arrived at by examining the frequency of the grade in all the sub comments under each evaluation criterion for each component/subcomponent. The grade which has a higher frequency of appearance for the evaluation criteria becomes the overall rating for the programme under the evaluation criteria.

Components	Relevance & Quality of Design		Efficiency of Implementation		Effectiveness		Impact		Sustainability	
EU Program of Support Overall	Relevance & Quality of Design	B	Efficiency of Implementation	B	Effectiveness	B	Impact	C	Sustainability	C
ASWAp-SP component	Relevance & Quality of Design	A	Efficiency of Implementation	B	Effectiveness	B	Impact	C	Sustainability	C

[21]Scores are as follows: A = very good; B = good; C= problems; D = serious deficiencies

GBI component	Relevance & Quality of Design	A	Efficiency of Implementation	C	Effectiveness	C	Impact	C	Sustainability	C
Unallocated TA component	Relevance & Quality of Design	A	Efficiency of Implementation	A	Effectiveness	A	Impact	B	Sustainability	B

Source: Own Compilation

Despite the design of the support to GBI being relevant with an A score, all the other criteria (efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) merit lower scores, which mean that there are problems at the implementation level. While the design has, on the whole, been good, the root causes of this sometimes moderately weak performance are delays and non-commitment of all the funds that were allocated for irrigation support. In addition, the reason that effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the irrigation support merit low scores is the lack of actual results. Only future perspectives of these criteria are positive, mainly because of the integrated approach to irrigation development, which is being applied.

3. ESTIMATION OF WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHIN THIS TIME FRAME

3.1 ASWAP-SP

There is need for continuation of implementation of all activities being funded currently. There is however need to put more resources into principally, among others, conservation agriculture, community empowerment, lake capture fisheries, and banana BBTV control. Given the flexibility related to the MDTF tool, there should be continued support to the MoAIWD in addressing any other issue affecting the sector during the lifetime of the MDTF support.

3.2 GBI

All ongoing activities under GBI should be continued so as to deliver irrigation schemes from which farmers can benefit by growing irrigated crops. The development of irrigation schemes should be complemented by support to the adoption of appropriate and sustainable practices both for production and for agribusiness aspects.

3.3 UNALLOCATED TA

The Unallocated TA component has been utilised to the full. This means that in the remaining period what can be done is to conclude studies which are still on-going such as: (1) Coordinator of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition activities in Malawi; (2) Formulation of the 11th EDF AFIKEPO Nutrition Programme in Malawi; (3) Formulation of the 11th EDF Sustainable Agriculture Programme for Malawi (KULIMA); and (4) Donor Nutrition Security Group (DoNUTS) Coordinator.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 ASWAp-SP Conclusions

The achievement of the Development Objective of improving the effectiveness of investments aimed at food security and sustainable agricultural growth, and strengthening the natural resource base in agricultural lands, through a doubling of the area under sustainable land management as a basis for securing ecosystem services and sustainable agricultural productivity, is mixed. In some quarters, progress towards improving effectiveness of agriculture investments has been achieved through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund and also the various successful interventions in many sub-sectors. However, the doubling of the area under sustainable land management is not progressing as planned. There has also been slippage in some of the indicators for the PDO especially for food security, which are off track, but this is understandable following two years of well below average rainfall, as well as flooding.

The Multi-Donor Trust Fund has improved coordination of agriculture investment into agriculture. It is a tool that allows pooling of resources by donors thereby simplifying reporting procedures and coordination. It is also a tool which readily provides resources to implement several GoM programmes by the Government institutions. For example, it has been able to provide resources for responding to BBTVD, and emergency response to floods and drought which were not in the original project design. This is done under close supervision by World Bank, Administrator of the MDTF, which ensures overall management of the Trust Fund related activities. It is therefore a useful tool that needs to be continued and will bring further integration through pooling of funds which is better than project based funding.

Examples of excellence were evident as a result of ASWAp-SP intervention in many sub-sectors and districts. These included: a) improved and locally adapted maize varieties leading to higher yields, improved food security, and lower risk; b) greater crop diversity, particularly of legumes, leading to risk spread, dietary improvements for farm families, and improved cash incomes; c) simple and solid improvements in livestock ownership leading to more farm families owning livestock, and as a result having more assets to fall back on and greater resilience in times of low crop yields or crop failure, and also improved farm family nutrition; and d) catchment conservation incorporating CA and agro-forestry. However, only some of these, a), b) and c) could be said to be widespread. The last, d), is still in demonstration phase and though the knowledge is fairly widespread there is a reluctance to take it up.

Also immensely encouraging are examples of community sensitization, and empowerment through the enactment and enforcement of local by-laws. These have been successful in general agricultural extension (the Rumphi model), in catchment conservation and CA (in several locations), and in lakeshore capture fisheries (the Nkhata Bay Ripple Africa model). They have demonstrated the prior need for firm foundations in community ownership and that without this, just the dissemination of technological packages on their own will often fail.

The MTR team agrees with the Department of Fisheries that the Nkhata Bay Ripple Africa model is now ready to go to scale with ASWAp-SP support, and demonstrates an exciting combination of community ownership and simple technology, backed by district authorities and bye-laws, and with overall leadership in implementation by Department of Fisheries.

For historical reasons, many critical sub-sectors still need to be implemented largely by government but with gradual and increasing involvement of the private sector. Three sub-

sectors are especially critical: DAES in general, catchment conservation in particular, and lake capture fisheries. But government should not monitor its own performance without highly specialised professional benchmarking, and has demonstrated that there are serious downsides if it does. The MTR recommends that GoM should use ASWAp-SP resources to recruit three specialized M&E firms or NGOs in these three sub-sectors to report accurately and regularly, to identify bottlenecks, and to recommend remedial solutions on an on-going and intermittent basis. Neither GoM nor WB can be expected to have or to co-opt the required expertise, which is quite highly specialized and requires deep local knowledge. It is normal to contract a construction company to build a road or a bridge, and to contract a separate company for supervision. The same principle should also apply to these three critical sub-sectors.

Coordination under ASWAp-SP has sometimes been poor. This has been reflected not only in implementation of activities on the ground but also in the reporting especially for the quarterly reports which has not encourage integration of effort of the ministry's departments of DARS, DAES, Crops Department, and Department of Land Resources and Conservation.

Road construction under ASWAp-SP now in progress in Chikwawa district will have beneficial impact on farming communities in areas of black cotton soils which are highly productive agriculturally but difficult to build roads through, and thus scores well on Relevance as well as the other evaluation criteria. Technically, these roads are without fault, but the MTR team, having seen a new road at Lifuwu that was recently constructed without ASWAp-SP support where an unprotected and eroding catchment seems to have led to a higher and more expensive specification than would have been necessary if the catchment had been protected, warns that the same could happen under future ASWAp-SP road construction unless there is coordination between Roads Department and Department of Land Resources and Conservation. Community sensitization prior to road construction has also been somewhat lacking under ASWAp-SP. Overall, however, ASWAp-SP roads score higher than any other sub-sector.

A Core Function Analysis of MoAIWD which was concluded in July 2016 main output was identification of functions, which are core and non-core for the MoAIWD but at this stage, unless other phases for core function analysis are implemented, it is unlikely to deliver the required solutions that match the scale of the problem; which is, fundamentally, a public sector which is too large and unaffordable with insufficient private sector involvement.

4.1.2 GBI Conclusions

To implement an integrated approach of the development of irrigation schemes, the coordination between MoAIWD/DoI and other departments of MoAIWD (for instance DAES) as well as with other ministries (natural resources: forestry; trade) is required. Their contributions are essential.

Implementation of the Irrigation Fund is very slow when compared to the period it has taken from the time the creation of the IF was defined in the Irrigation Act of 2001 and now when few activities have been undertaken for its operationalization. The updated IF Guidelines were approved in August 2016 by the Treasury, the Board members of the IF have been nominated in December 2016 and a bank account for the IF was also opened in 2016. To establish the IF, activities need to be undertaken to mobilize financial resources from stakeholders such as

dissemination of the Irrigation Fund guidelines, convening of donor conferences and participation in regional investment fora.

Delays in programme implementation are due to the time-consuming communication and decision processes between EUD, NAO-SU and DoI, including planning, proposal writing and review, forward and backward communication, submissions, resubmissions, negotiations, approvals etc. The period between the launch of proposals for the grant schemes and the date of signing contract is long (15-16 months); construction/completion period of scheme infrastructure, before delivering irrigation water (8 - 18 months); summing up the period between launch of the proposals and signing of contract (15-16 months); plus the expected period to deliver the irrigation water to the schemes (8 to 18 months); thus overall it will take 2 to 3 years (23 to 34 months) before the beneficiaries could realize actual benefit from the irrigation scheme.

Regarding the efficiency of the Programme Estimates, the absorption rate of PE1 and PE2 was low due to many diverse activities, the planning and implementation of which take much time and effort. The implementation of PE activities is managed by a three-layered structure: two ministries and the EUD. This complex setup is sufficient reason for obtaining partial and slower results. The delay in establishing the Irrigation Fund is also a cause of concern for the development of irrigation and needs to be speeded up

Regarding impact, all six grants contracts, and the works contract for the Bwanje dam, have been signed but water has not yet been delivered while engineering works proceed. Expectations are that the gradual increased awareness of the benefits of an integrated approach to irrigation scheme development by WUAs, agribusiness, catchment protection, etc. will contribute to a positive impact.

Regarding sustainability, the situation is not clear. The nucleus and out grower commercial model similar to the Phata Scheme, shows most likelihood of success. However, that supposes the presence of a dedicated buyer of irrigated commercial crops which can be possible through approaching irrigation development using the value chain approach. Finally, the threat of catchment degradation is real and deserves attention in all irrigation schemes.

4.1.3 Unallocated TA

Unallocated TA is fully relevant to the needs of Malawi and to its Development Partner's agenda. There are numerous success stories recorded in various documents, and from discussions with stakeholders[22]. Unallocated TA Services are an important resource for dealing with unforeseen but necessary activities and should continue in other EU-funded projects.

The Unallocated TA brought flexibility to the implementation of activities which were not anticipated during formulation of the programme but later on the activities were revealed to be necessary for the delivery of the results for ASWAp-SP

[22] The NA has facilitated identification of 15 policy actions, attracted private sector investment and DP funding commitments into the agriculture sector; KULIMA formulation results are being used by EU to develop a programme of support for agriculture; seed study results led to testing of all seeds in shops. For more examples refer to section 2.2.4.

4.2 LESSONS

The MTR has come up with 8 lessons learned and these have been categorised into management, implementation and coordination.

A. Management

Lesson 1: EU Financing Agreements, effect of delayed implementation

Once an FA is signed with the EU there is need to have the resources committed for implementation before the expiry of the D+3 period. Failure to show timely commitment to funding agreements can have serious implications for effective delivery of results as has happened currently. About € 4 million has remained uncommitted and will no longer be available to Malawi due late decision making. This is an important lesson to note despite the circumstances under which it occurred.

Lesson 2: Demand-driven activities improve sustainability of agriculture investments

There are several activities which have been funded and implemented using the EU Programme of Support. One such initiative is the Unallocated Technical Assistance Services. The initiative funded demand-driven *ad hoc* activities identified by EU or MoAIWD. The outcome of funding activities which were demand-driven based on need is that most of the outputs from the activities/studies of the Unallocated TA have already been integrated into other programmes by the EU or MoAIWD which has resulted in improved sustainability of the initiative.

Lesson 3: Need for spreading FISP investments to other equally important sustainable agriculture development initiatives

Most of the resources under the Sustainable Productivity Growth Initiative have been used to fund legume seed under FISP. This has crowded out investment in other initiatives such as market-based risk management, legume production and marketing, and promotion of Public Private Partnerships. In addition, GoM's heavy subsidisation of the fertiliser element of FISP (though not supported by ASWAp-SP) is too highly concentrated on the single crop, maize, to an extent that it is not sustainable, and that the balance should shift towards greater sustainability and crop diversity through support to conservation agriculture, improved extension, irrigation, livestock, and fisheries.

B. Implementation

Lesson 4: Limited agribusiness services support to GBI negatively affects development of irrigation

Limited agribusiness support to GBI activities is a big concern for the successful development of irrigation schemes in a sustainable manner as demonstrated by lack of agribusiness support activities in the irrigation schemes. The MTR recommends co-opting of DoI into the Commercial Agriculture and Agribusiness technical working Group of the ASWAp-SP so that the sharing of information and responsibilities of DoI with DAES and the concerned private sector could be made more transparent and action-oriented. The agribusiness support which is required would target especially access to better markets at better prices, entrepreneurship development, marketing intelligence and marketing skills including use of a value chain approach to addressing farmers' constraints.

Also in view of the existing historical management problems with the Bwanje and Lifuwu Irrigation schemes cooperatives, these schemes could not be revitalized with agribusiness

support services alone because of complete mistrust among the farmers, so it is not sufficient to provide new training in agri-business only. Also needed is a study to identify constraints and solutions to group cohesion, marketing, credit mechanisms, rice processing among others in the two schemes. Also, an assessment of the performance of other agribusiness initiatives in the six grantee schemes, is needed.

Lesson 5: An integrated approach would work better in combination with a value chain approach to irrigation development

The 6 grant schemes under development are using an integrated approach to ensure sustainability of the schemes. However, evidence shows that use of this integrated approach would work better if used in combination with a value chain approach to irrigation development. Furthermore, such a value chain approach with out-grower anchor models linked to a dedicated buyer has proved to be very successful. Examples of such successful initiatives which have already been applied in Malawi is the Phata Sugarcane Cooperative.

Lesson 6: Community sensitization backed by local bye-laws can help speed up adoption of conservation agriculture (and other technologies)

Evidence so far suggests that adoption of conservation agriculture was greatest in communities where there had been community sensitization and mobilization backed up by local bye-laws that were enforced effectively and enthusiastically by the community. However, generally there is a problem of low adoption of CA. It would therefore be interesting to conduct a study which would identify in a very objective manner the root causes of lack of smooth adoption of CA. This would provide lessons to base on for suggesting improvement of the approach which should go beyond the simple adoption of the CA technology.

C. Coordination

Lesson 7: Good coordination is an important attribute for successful implementation of integrated approaches to irrigation development.

The use of an integrated approach to the development of the 6 grant irrigation schemes requires good coordination especially the coordination between DoI and other departments of MoAIWD (for instance DAES) and other ministries (Natural Resources: Forestry; Trade) is required. Currently, evidence shows that there has been some improvement in coordination to the effect that ASWAp-SP has brought on board the Ministry of Transport and Public Works through the Roads sub-component in ASWAp-SP. There is, however, room for more coordination to ensure that each stakeholder is able to contribute effort effectively in order to ensure successful delivery of results. The coordination could be improved through co-opting the relevant ASWAp TWG, the Imprest Administrator for GBI support.

Lesson 8: MDTF is a tool for coordination of investments into agriculture development and responding to emerging issues in agriculture

MDTF is a flexible resource, which has enabled the MoAIWD and development partners to be able to respond to emerging issues. These include the BBTV problem in bananas, the inclusion of lake capture fisheries, livestock in the Department of Animal Health and Industry (DAHI) of MoAIWD, and the large scale adoption of root and tuber crops as a response to drought. The MTR is therefore recommending that the MDTF is a tool which merits continued support.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION

The MTR team has formulated 11 recommendations on how the EU Programme of 'Support to the implementation of the agriculture sector wide approach (ASWAP) and the green belt initiative (GBI)' should proceed from now on including the responsible institution to move forward the various recommendations. See Table 7 below.

Table 7: Recommendations and the Responsible Institution

Id.	Recommendation	Time Frame	Responsible Institution
1	Continuation of utilisation of outputs from Unallocated TA Services	February 2017 to '19	EU, MoAIWD
2.	Co-opting of DoI into the Commercial Agriculture and Agribusiness technical working Group of the ASWAp-SP	By June 2017	ASWAp Secretariat
4.	Need for Spreading FISP Investments to other Equally Important Sustainable Agriculture Development Initiatives	By July 2017	MoAIWD
5.	Applying Value Chain Approach to Irrigation Development – similar to Phata Sugar Coorperative	By April 2017	DoI
6.	Increased coordination in implementation of integrated approaches to Irrigation Development	March 2017 to 2019	DoI
7.	Continuation of MDTF beyond June 2017	June 2017	WB
8	Undertake a study to identify factors hampering use of CA on a large scale in order to ascertain the factors hampering the success of conservation agriculture farming	By May 2016	MoAIWD with support from WB
9	Need to proceed with the next phases of the Core Function Analysis of the MoAIWD	April 2017	MoAIWD
10	Continuation of implementation of the remaining activities under the roads component	Ongoing	WB
11	Continuation of implementation of GBI activities	Ongoing	DoI
12	Continuation of implementation of Unallocated TA activities – New Alliance Coordinator and DONUTS Coordinator	Ongoing	EU
13	Undertake activities to mobilize financial resources from stakeholders such as dissemination of the Irrigation Fund guidelines, convening of donor conferences and participation in regional investment fora.	March 2017 onwards	GBI and DoI