

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE)



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ISSUES

Malawi is a densely populated landlocked country with a population of 17.7 million. Its population growth is about three per cent per year, and it has one of lowest GDPs in the world, with a human development index (HDI) ranking of 174 out of 187 countries.

Many Malawians (51 per cent) live below the poverty line of US\$1 per day, and this poverty incidence is mainly rural (85 per cent). Endemic poverty has also led to chronic food insecurity and malnutrition for 2.8 million Malawians, combined with HIV/AIDs prevalence of nearly 12 per cent.

PRIDE is focused in northern and southern regions of Malawi. As recently as April 2016 districts in central and southern Malawi have been in a government defined "state of disaster". During January/February 2015, strong rains caused major flooding in southern Malawi, destroying agricultural land, houses and assets. The extreme weather displaced more than 300,000 people.

In January 2016 foot-and-mouth disease broke out in southern Malawi. The El Nino induced drought also hit hard rendering the 2014/15 harvest 24 per cent lower than the previous five year average. There was a 12.4 per cent decline in maize production in the 2015/16 growing season as well.

Rain-fed farming is dominant in Malawi; which has historically been associated with low cash generation, hard labour and menial status. These are not attributes that make it appealing to the vast majority of smallholder farmers. On top of this, women and youth still remain at a disadvantage. They continue to have little control over production, few employment opportunities, less income, and fragmentation of land holdings.



Investing in rural people

**Adaptation for
Smallholder
Agriculture
Programme**

ASAP

Launched in 2012, the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) channels climate and environmental finance to enable smallholder farmers who participate in IFAD projects to increase their resilience. Through ASAP, IFAD is systematically integrating climate resilience into the overall IFAD portfolio.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Total cost: US\$83.94m

Approved IFAD loan:
US\$26.48m

IFAD Grant: US\$26.54m

ASAP grant: US\$7.06m

Other contributions:
Department for International Development (DFID):
US\$0.5m
Private Sector: US\$3m
Government of Malawi:
US\$13.08m
Beneficiaries: US\$7.28m

Project period: 7 years (2015-2022)

Executing agency: Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development

ASAP beneficiaries:
17,000 households

Project objective: To enhance the resilience of rural communities to food insecurity, the effects of climate change and economic shocks.

ACTIONS

The programme work has been split into two main components: irrigation development and catchment management; and agriculture and market linkages. The work will target poor food insecure smallholder farmers of the villages associated with each irrigation scheme.

Component One will work specifically formulate land and water agreements aimed at improving access for smallholder farmers participating in the programme irrigation schemes and help them to establish functional water users' associations (WUAs) and obtain representation on catchment management committees. PRIDE will develop climate-resilient land and water management systems for the smallholder farmers seeking to transition from rain-fed to irrigated agriculture. It will establish and strengthen the capacity of the WUAs to manage, operate and maintain irrigation schemes with appropriate land and water governance.

ASAP funding will aim specifically to raise agricultural productivity, namely through irrigation infrastructure, and water storage to grow a second or third crop. Meanwhile, PRIDE will address environmental degradation risks by investing in soil and water conservation measures.

Component Two will promote adoption of environmentally sustainable agricultural production systems by smallholder households on both rain-fed and irrigated land. It will also build the capacity of the smallholder producers through farmer business schools so they can take advantage of market opportunities. This component will develop market linkages through analyses which identify suitable crops and commodity platforms to bring together all actors in the value chains. Through efficient knowledge transfer to smallholders; including through trials and demonstrations, combined with better information from the private sector on market potential and opportunities, PRIDE will engender climate-smart good agricultural practices (GAPs) among beneficiaries. This will include the use of weather and climate information services, irrigation optimisation, application of integrated pest

management and reduction of post-harvest losses.

EXPECTED IMPACTS

In total PRIDE will provide over 4,000 hectares of irrigated land, constructing 15 new irrigation schemes, as well as upgrades to existing schemes.

Irrigation has the potential to increase yields sustainably and provide multiple harvests per year, and if high value crops are grown this will generate attractive benefit/cost ratios and assure food security. Through PRIDE activities there will be a 50 per cent increase in yield of selected high value crops and a 30 per cent increase in yield of selected rain-fed crops.

The programme will also invest in restoring soil cover on environmentally fragile land, controlling erosion and carrying out reforestation of slopes and protection of river buffer zones. These actions will also serve to contribute to reductions in national greenhouse gases. The introduction of fuel efficient cook stoves will lead to a reduction in need for fuelwood, by as much as 60 per cent, which will free up smallholder farmers time to pursue other income generating activities.

PRIDE will result in the enhanced climate resilience of smallholder farming systems, increasing productivity as well as reversing land degradation. PRIDE will scale up the successful activities from the IFAD co-financed Irrigation Rural Livelihoods Development Programme (IRLADP).

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