

A case study on designing, piloting and scaling-up a land redistribution programme in Malawi¹

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Introduction

Malawi being a largely agrarian economy, access to land has a direct impact on the livelihood and quality of life of the majority of Malawians, particularly those in the rural areas. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, Malawi is experiencing considerable inequality in land distribution. The most notable reason for this status quo is that in some areas huge amount of land have been transferred from customary tenure to leasehold, leaving many smallholder farmers with very little or no land at all to sustain their livelihood. This problem is more pronounced in districts such as Mulanje and Thyolo where vast land has been turned into tea estates, forcing smallholder farmers onto congested marginal lands.

¹ This paper has been prepared for the workshop “Land Redistribution in Africa: Towards a common vision.” The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank and its affiliated organizations, or those of the Executive Directors of The World Bank or the governments they represent.

² Members of PMU and Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources made significant input into this paper.

The conversion of customary land into leasehold for burley tobacco production in the 1980s-early 1990s, created a similar problem to the rest of the country. To address the problem, the Government decided to develop a National Land Policy (NLP) that would guide equitable land distribution in the country.

The NLP was designed to achieve specific objectives. Among them are:

- To ensure secure tenure and equitable access to land without any gender bias and/or discrimination to all citizens of Malawi, as stipulated under Article 28 of the Constitution;
- To instil order and discipline into land allocation and land market transactions to curb encroachment, unapproved development, speculation and racketeering;
- To ensure accountability and transparency in the administration of land matters, and guarantee that existing rights on land, especially customary rights of the small holders, are recognized, clarified, and ultimately protected by-law;
- To facilitate efficient use of land under market conditions to ensure optimum benefits from land development;
- To provide formal and orderly arrangements for granting titles and delivering land services in a modern and decentralized registration system that supports local governments throughout Malawi; and,
- To promote community participation and public awareness at all levels to ensure environmentally sustainable land use practices, and good land stewardship.

Like other Southern Africa countries, Malawi inherited a rural settlement structure in which white farmers held some of the most fertile and well-watered lands. The effect of the concentration of freeholds in districts settled by the white farmers in the Southern Region and subsequent

expansion of estate agriculture after independence resulted in small and fragmented landholding sizes and social tensions.

On the basis of estimates made in 1994, 2.6 million hectares of suitable agricultural land remains uncultivated in the rural areas. This means that approximately 28 percent of the country's total land area is lying idle. As a result there is an urgent need to strategize on how to relieve land pressure in the severely affected parts of the country. In part the CBRLDP is meant to address this problem in Thyolo and Mulanje Districts.

Since independence in 1964, the Government of Malawi has undertaken resettlement of people for various reasons. For instance, the establishment of the Capital City in Lilongwe meant that some people had to be displaced and therefore resettled in the neighbouring districts. Also a number of agricultural resettlement schemes meant to spearhead agricultural development were initiated. In the recent past the Government bought some estates in a number of districts, including the four pilot districts for redistribution to the needy citizens.

The need to have an orderly land redistribution initiative to address the needs of many smallholder farmers was therefore identified as one of the major recommendations of the NLP. In designing the current project, lessons from earlier resettlement initiatives were taken into account.

Conceptual framework of the Community Based Rural Land Development Project

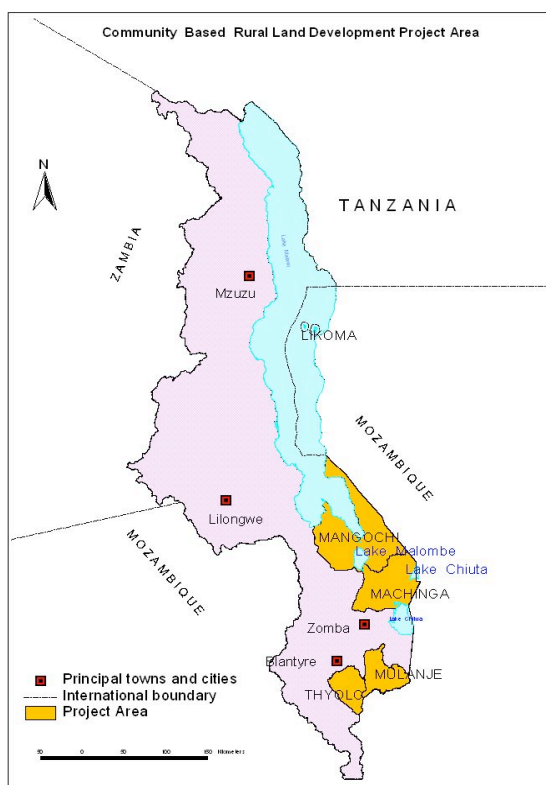
The Community Based Rural Land Development Project (CBRLDP) is one of the initiatives taken by the Government of Malawi in implementing the Land Reform Programme (LRP). It is community-driven and focuses on rural areas, where poverty is most pervasive. The estimated total project cost is US\$27,307,192. The World Bank (WB) through the International Development Association, (IDA) has provided a grant of US\$27 million. The Government has provided the balance. The project was retrofitted in December 2005 thereby removing government contribution altogether. Implementation of the project started in July 2004 and is expected to be completed in June 2009.

The goal of the pilot Community Based Rural Land Development Project (CBRLDP) is to contribute towards poverty reduction. The project is an integral part of the Land Reform Programme and is consistent with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) goals. The objective of the Project is to increase the incomes of about 15,000 rural poor in four pilot districts. Specifically the project is providing land to the landless and land-poor beneficiary groups. The Project aims at: (a) improving land delivery systems of accessing, titling and registration; (b) providing security of land tenure; (c) increasing agricultural productivity; and (d) increasing incomes of participating beneficiaries.

Project Area

The Project covers four districts in southern Malawi namely, Mulanje, Thyolo, Machinga and Mangochi (see Map) with a combined population of about 1.9 million. Mulanje

and Thyolo districts have very high population densities, 208/km² and 268/km² respectively (NSO 1998). Coincidentally, these are the main tea growing areas of the country. Most of the good arable land is under tea estates largely owned by foreign investors. This has created land scarcity among smallholder farmers. Analysis of the recent Integrated Household Survey indicates average per capita land holding size of 0.33 ha and land pressure is the most intense in the southern region, where all the four pilot districts are located.



Mangochi and Machinga districts have medium population density of around 97 persons/km². During the peak of the tobacco industry in the 1980s and early 1990s, large tracks of customary land were converted from customary tenure into leasehold and allocated to individuals deemed able to effectively utilize the land for cash crop production, particularly burley tobacco. In effect, this created localised land shortage on the part of smallholder farmers. Since smallholders were prohibited from producing tobacco, they

offered themselves as workers or sharecroppers to the new estates. The prohibition on smallholder burley tobacco cultivation was abolished around 1995 with repeal of the Special Crops Act and smallholders left the estates to cultivate burley tobacco on their own land. As a consequence, tobacco production on the estates has become unprofitable and is on the decline, and many estate owners want to sell their estates, either in whole or part. Under-utilisation of land leased to the estates is also high; in some cases it is as high as 50%.

The choice of the four districts for the pilot phase of the Project was because Mulanje and Thyolo are currently experiencing acute land pressure while Machinga and Mangochi have many unused and under-utilised estate land which would be a source of land for beneficiary groups.

Project Justification

Unequal Land Distribution - There is inequality of land distribution in Malawi. Land pressure is caused by a combination of factors including conversion of customary land into other land tenure categories – public, leasehold and freehold, socio-economic factors and high population growth rates. Land acquisition and redistribution to the needy will ease land pressure. Through change of ownership, titling and regularisation, security of tenure on acquired estates for smallholder farmers is being achieved. This is not only reducing social tension in rural areas but is also empowering the beneficiaries to take full control in the development of their land parcels.

Land Market Failure / Mismatch between supply and demand - Malawian rural land markets are very unbalanced. It has been observed that there is a growing supply of land as a result of the so-called “Estate Crisis,” mostly of unprofitable, poorly managed tobacco estates. But in any given area, there are few buyers. In two of

the four pilot districts – Machinga and Mangochi - however, there is a vibrant land market. As the tobacco industry continues to face difficulties, more estates are being offered for sale to the project.

Although Government in recent years has increase land rent for agricultural land, collection of land rent has not been aggressive. Recently the Government imposed a moratorium on the collection of ground rent and land tax, by the Tobacco Auction Floors as this was only targeting tobacco farmers. Other farmers who produce others crops were not subjected to the same arrangement. Government is reportedly taking steps to normalise the situation. In addition Government is considering introducing an equitable land rent structure that would take into consideration farm size and levels of input systems. Due to this inconsistency, the increase in land rent has not yet led to the release of “excess” or unused/under utilised land.

In Mulanje and Thyolo Districts the land

under tea is on freehold and currently it is not subjected to land rent. Increase in land rent would have no impact on decision whether to sell excess land or not.

Policy Direction - The project is complementing Government effort to reduce rural poverty through increased access to assets by the rural poor. It is facilitating access to land by the landless and land-poor beneficiary groups. In addition, customary estate will be accorded tenure security as other categories – private and public land. Specifically, the project is supporting (a) institutional reforms in land administration and capacity building at the district level to respond to community-initiated investment initiatives, (b) land policy analysis and monitoring capacity at the national level and (c) the ongoing land reform process, both at the national and local levels.

Decentralizing land administration - The enactment of the 1998 Decentralization Act gave local authorities (Assemblies) increased powers and responsibilities for

Box 1: Core Principles

- Land redistribution will take place only on farm lands acquired from willing sellers, land transferred from Government administration, or private donations;
- The project will explicitly exclude protected or fragile areas, or areas with restricted/limited agricultural potential;
- Beneficiaries will be self-selected, formed in groups on a voluntary basis, and subject to predefined eligibility criteria;
- Implementation will be decentralized, through the existing and emerging District Assembly institutions, consistent with decentralization policy;
- Project resources for LAFD will be transferred directly to beneficiaries and will be managed by themselves;
- Land given to a beneficiary household should be sufficient to meet subsistence and economic viability.
- Beneficiaries will decide the property regime under which they will hold the land (leasehold, free hold or customary estate)
- Enhanced capacity at all levels is a prerequisite for successful implementation of this project;
- Lessons learned from the pilot districts will determine the scope of future interventions.

land administration, including valuation, taxation, surveying, and enforcement of lease agreements.

Implementation of the CBRLDP is through a decentralised framework. Through the framework, communities are empowered to decide on what type of development they need and how it should be delivered. In this regard and with some guidance, beneficiaries under the project are able to identify land, prepare and implement their own farm development plans.

Further, the project is promoting accountability, transparent and participatory land governance at the local level in order to help government in eradicating corruption in land administration. This is being achieved by strengthening capacity at community, district and national levels.

Design Principles and Target Groups

The CBRLDP is a community-driven intervention being implemented through a decentralised framework. The Project Management Unit is coordinating project activities with various stakeholders. District Assemblies and its lower level structures are key to successful implementation of the project. Other stakeholders, notably non-governmental organisations (NGOs), are also playing a role in project implementation. Some sector ministries have devolved some of their functions to District Assemblies (DAs) and are thus providing technical support to project implementation.

At national level a number of committees are in place to help with implementation of the project. Among the notable ones are: (i) Project Steering Committee (PSC) which provides over-all policy guidance and mechanism for addressing cross-sectoral issues such as gender, environment and HIV/AIDS through advocacy, policy harmonisation and management support.

The PSC also approves annual work plans (AWPs) for the project. PSC members are from relevant ministries private sector and civil society; and, (ii) National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) reviews community subprojects approved by DEC and make recommendations to the Ministry for funding. NTAC activities also help to enforce transparency and accountability by DECs. Members for NTAC are from relevant ministries and civil society.

The CBRLDP is consistent with the broad framework for poverty reduction envisioned in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). The project design and implementation is based on the “Core Principles” shown in Box 1.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as women, orphans and poor displaced farm workers are encouraged to participate. Women are expected to constitute at least

Box 1: Summary of eligibility criteria Individual Applicant

- Malawi citizen;
- Landless¹ or land-poor¹ and food insecure; Least amount of land but with excess labour;
- Lowest income;
- Chronically dependent on external assistance;
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged;
- Not encroaching on the estate interested in.

Beneficiary Group

- No member benefited from previous land resettlement initiative;
 - Cohesive group of 10-35 house holds, with a common purpose, constitution and identifiable leadership;
 - Willingness to relocate and to engage in farming;
- Adherence to transparency and accountability principles;
- All member to actively participate
- Adherence to sectoral norms and recommended Practices

30% of the beneficiaries.

The typical target beneficiary is a self-selected, organized group of individuals and households that is defined and identified by an expressed need for land and a willingness to move as a group to newly acquired land. To qualify for funding under the Project, beneficiaries should meet two-tier predetermined eligibility criteria as shown in Box 2.

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary group to identify the land, which it proposes to acquire and directly negotiate the price with the landowner.

To ensure equitable distribution and easy administration of Land Acquisition and farm Development grant, each beneficiary receives uniform amount of US\$1,050 for land acquisition, resettlement allowance and farm development as shown in the pie chart below. For BGs travelling more than 50km to their farms, transportation cost is also provided.

Uniform LAFD grant ceiling of US\$1,050 per beneficiary



Process for developing community sub-projects

Social mobilisation - The Project regularly holds sensitization meetings in the pilot districts with District Executive Committees (DECs) and estate owners. Thereafter, the DEC members hold similar meetings at area and village levels where Area Development committees (ADCs), Village Development Committees (VDCs) and the general public are sensitized

through mass meetings. This is being augmented by radio and television programmes, episodes and jingles and print media.

At sensitization meetings, Individual Expression of Interest Forms are given to group and village heads for distribution to those interested to participate in the Project. The public is advised to form Community Oversight Committees (COCs) as sub-committees of Village Development Committees (VDCs) responsible for, among other things, distribution of application forms and vetting of applicants at the village level.

Response to all these mobilization efforts is encouraging as the communities are submitting a lot of Individual Expression of Interest Forms and estates owners are offering some land for sale in the pilot districts.

Vetting of individual expression of interest - COCs receive and register all Individual Expression of Interest Forms completed by individual applicants. The forms are later on checked for eligibility and are either accepted or rejected based on the eligibility criteria. The accepted forms are submitted to the village headman for endorsement. The COCs advise people whose forms have been approved to form a beneficiary group (BG) with 10 to 35 individual beneficiaries.

The BGs appoint interim leadership that complete a Group Expression of Interest Form to which all individual expression of interest forms are attached and sent to the District Commissioners.

Endorsement of Community Oversight Committees and beneficiaries - Once the Group Expression of Interest Forms are received, checked and registered at the DC's offices, the Lands Project Officers (LPOs) assisted by some DEC members organize meetings at the VDC levels where the community members endorse the eligibility of each member of the BGs. Composition and membership of COCs is confirmed. Upon

endorsement, the BGs elect office bearers for the Project Management Committees (PMCs) in a participatory manner and taking into consideration gender balance and trustworthiness. After the elections the BGs are taken through the LAFD Project Cycle. A list of estates on sale in the pilot districts are distributed to the BGs for perusal and selection. Some leaflets on HIV/AIDS voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) are also distributed.

Training - The COCs and PMCs are trained in their roles, project cycle, leadership skills, group dynamics, communication skills, conflict management, gender and HIV/AIDS mitigation.

Training of project beneficiaries is based on identified needs. It is coordinated by capacity building component. It may involve other components, District Training Teams (DTTs) and other stakeholders. Training sessions vary in duration depending on the subject

Verification of beneficiary group - Project staff together with some local extension workers and COC members verify the eligibility of each individual applicant in a BG through a group meeting and thereafter a field tour to the garden of each member. During the group meetings, each Individual Expression of Interest Form is thoroughly examined in the presence of the applicant. Minor changes may be made on the forms where necessary.

The verification exercise confirms that the would-be beneficiaries do or not satisfy the eligibility criteria for LAFD assistance.

Farm Identification and Price Negotiation - Project staff accompanied by officials from District Assemblies from the estates offered for sale are located inspect the farms to verify their existence and size, encroachment status, assess suitability for agricultural production, and examine infrastructure (including social infrastructure) existing on the estates and in the neighbourhood. Estates that are encroached, or have dual ownership or are not suitable for agricultural production are

not eligible to be purchased under this project and are therefore rejected.

The Project Management prepares guidelines for negotiations including indicative prices of agricultural land per hectare given the prevailing economic trend. BGs are given a list of eligible estates for inspection. If satisfied with the estate, the BGs negotiate the price per hectare with the owners. The owners then issue provisional letters of agreement to sell land to the BGs. Thereafter the BGs complete Group Application Forms prepare general farm plans and submit to the District Assemblies where the estate is located.

Field appraisals - Upon receipt of the documents, LPOs issue 21 day public notices to sell land which are posted within the districts concerned. In addition, the public notices are published in newspapers. Furthermore, the documents are circulated to Field Appraisal Team (FAT) members for scrutiny before field appraisals. While the public notice is still in force, the FATs appraise the estates in the presence of some members of the concerned PMCs, receiving COCs and the general public. The FATs prepare appraisal reports and suggest recommendations for the approval of the DEC.

Approval process - The FATs' reports and recommendations are included within the individual sub-project documents which are presented to DEC for approval. Upon approval, sub-projects are sent to the Project Management Unit for onward submission to a National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) for further review and final approval by the Ministry.

Farm Development - The main occupation of beneficiaries of this project is agriculture. To ensure that land is put into good use on a sustainable basis, beneficiaries are required to develop preliminary farm land use plan (with assistance from agricultural officers) as part of their subproject submission to the District Assembly. Each BG, with assistance from agricultural extension staff develops a

budget for farm development. These funds are released in three tranches of 60%-20%-20%. The first tranche is also designed to enable BGs secure safe drinking water, either a borehole or protected shallow as advised by water technicians.

After the first season, BGs, with assistance from the agricultural extension staff develop a detailed farm plan taking into account environmental management concerns. The release of the third tranche is tied to having the farm development plan approved by DEC.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework was developed to ensure that useful, reliable, and timely feedback is provided to Government and other relevant stakeholders on project implementation regarding the attainment of project objectives, identifying necessary measures to address bottlenecks and weaknesses, and for assessing the implications beyond the project's immediate beneficiaries.

So far monitoring and evaluation reports through independent evaluators, quarterly reviews, field supervisory missions and mid-term review have highlighted some positive impacts of the project as well as weaknesses requiring attention.

Management Information System (MIS) data is still not fully captured. Inadequate technical capacity at PMU and district level to operationalize the MIS and integrate with the M&E system has only been resolved in the last six months. Lack of an operating MIS for data capturing, storage and analysis has affected decision making at times.

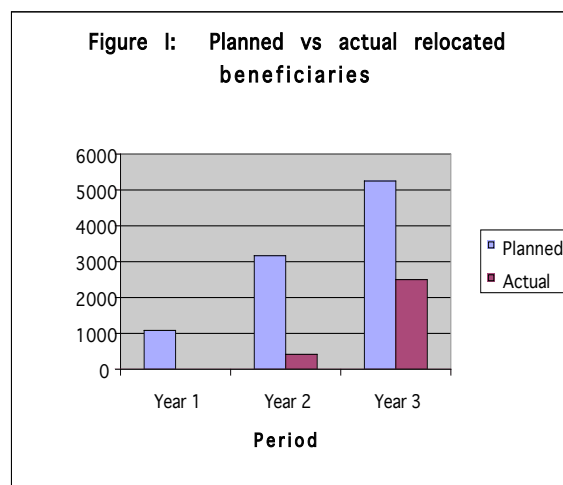
Achievements so far

While the project started on a slow pace in year 1 (with no relocation of BGs) due to a number of reasons including: delayed approval of the first procurement plan, delayed mobilisation of human and material resources, scepticism by estate owners

about Government's commitment to pay for their land, the Project Management Unit took a long time to master procedures outlined in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM) apparently because it was afraid of making mistakes, and sustained misconceptions about the project.

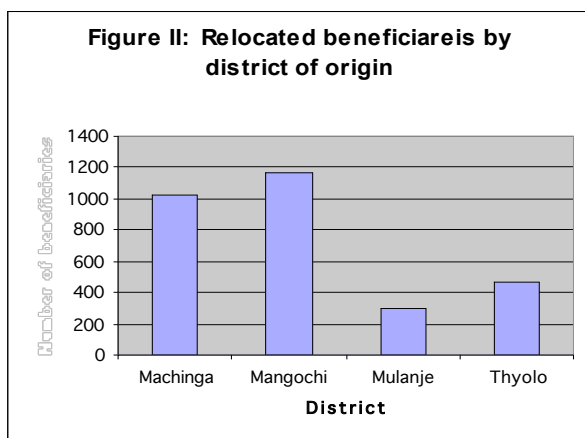
Number of relocated beneficiaries

Progress from year 2 to date has shown that there is potential to accelerate the drive towards achieving the project objectives (Figure I). The number of beneficiaries that have been relocated jumped from zero in year 1 to 1,355 in year 2, which was a remarkable progression although the overall achievement to date is only 19% of the 5-year projections. Similarly the number of beneficiary groups and sub-projects approved, the number of hectares surveyed and acquired, the number of Trust Deeds registered, and group land title transfers are all showing an increasing trend from year 2.



Although performance has improved sharply, and the pace of BG relocation has accelerated sharply during the past year and is now at a satisfactory pace, the number of beneficiary groups relocated, is still below the Project Appraisal Document (PDA) target, as a result of the slow start up during the first 2 years. However, the number of relocated beneficiaries has surpassed by a wide margin the targets agreed in May 2006.

There has been intra-district relocation in Machinga and Mangochi, and inter-district relocation from Mulanje and Thyolo to either Machinga or Mangochi as shown in Figure II. So far the project has not received any offers for land in Mulanje and Thyolo Districts. This is not entirely surprising because most of private land in Mulanje and Thyolo is under multinational companies growing tea and other high value tree crops. Because of the inter-district relocation, there has been increased pressure on financial resources as LPOs from Mulanje and Thyolo frequently travel to Machinga and Mangochi with beneficiaries for farm identification and field appraisal.

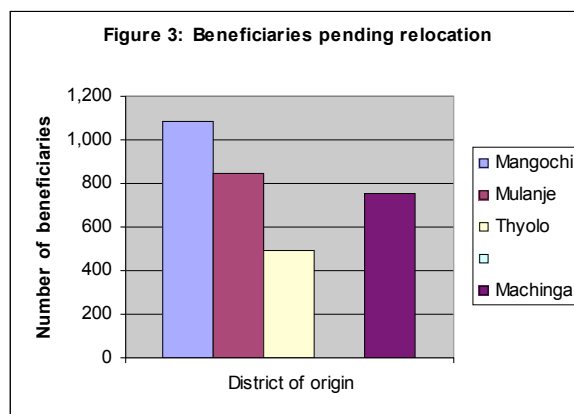


Just under 3,200 beneficiaries are pending relocation within June-July period. For about half of them land and resettlement allowances have been paid for already. 2,422 beneficiaries will relocate to Mangochi while 754 will relocate within Machinga. Figure 3 shows district of origin of the beneficiaries pending relocation.

Other subprojects are at various stages of the approval process which indicates that the relocation process is on a sustained growth path. This has come about because of streamlining of land acquisition process leading to reduction of lead time from 9 months to 4 months, increased contacts between PMU and communities, and enhanced team work.

Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely that sufficient numbers of beneficiaries can be

relocated during the coming 2 years to achieve the target 15,000 by the closing date of the project.



Provision of potable clean water

Although initially the project was not meant to provide water to the beneficiaries, it later became clear this was a serious omission. A corrective measure was taken by changing the disbursement schedule of the farm development fund from 40% – 30% – 30% to 60% – 20% – 20% to enable BGs finance the most urgent infrastructure such as boreholes/protected wells for safe drinking water, and access roads and bridges to the farms they have procured. So far sixteen (16) boreholes have been drilled. An additional borehole was donated by the Christian Service Committee (CSC) in Malawi and thirty-six (36) protected shallow wells are functional. Despite these efforts, only 42% of the 127 BGs who have relocated have access to clean potable drinking water.

Working with Non government organisations (NGOs)

Although it has been the desire of the project to work with NGOs in serving beneficiaries, this took time to materialise. Firstly because most NGOs work in particular areas, at times outside areas where beneficiaries have relocated to. Secondly, they needed to define their

specific involvement. The situation has now changed.

An NGO, Green Line Movement, in Machinga is providing extension services to BGs in natural resource management together with their specific clientele. Their programme is jointly developed by the NGO, Project and District Agricultural Development Office staff. As noted already, CSC have also supported one BG with a borehole and have pledged to provide orientation on Farmer-to-Farmer Extension Approach to Project and District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) staff sometime in April or May 2007.

Integrating BGs with surrounding communities

To accelerate integration of BGs with surrounding communities, beneficiaries are encouraged to participate in broader community development work. While local communities are urged to involve beneficiaries in local development structures such as VDCs and ADCs. BGs are advised to ensure that social amenities provided by the project such as clean water from boreholes drilled using project funds benefit surrounding communities as well. The Project will continue sensitization of local chiefs, PMCs and COCs on the need for the two communities to integrate.

Land surveying

Surveying of acquired estates initially progressed at a snails pace due to use of archaic surveying equipment. As such only 6,738 hectares (20%) of the projected 33,570 hectares by the end of year 5 has been surveyed.

In addition to delays arising from use of archaic surveying equipment, upon farm identification, a search has to be conducted in the land and deeds registries to establish the authenticity of the tile holder and indebtedness. Survey data is processed manually to produce deed plans which are

approved, by law, only by the Surveyor General.

Out of 127 BGs, only 36 BGs have received Group Land Titles, representing a mere 8%. Additional 53 Group Land Title Transfers are being processed.

Land Disputes

A number of disputes between BGs and surrounding communities erupted over boundaries. Usually surrounding communities do not recognise estate boundaries. Absence of beacons to mark estate boundaries exacerbate the problem as local communities take advantage of the situation. Although most of the disputes have been resolved, some are yet to be resolved. District Assembly officials and traditional leaders have played leading roles in land conflict resolution.

Institutional capacity building

The project is enhancing institutional capacities through formal and non-formal training, establishment of community-based committees, recruitment of project personnel and provision of resources to beneficiary groups, central and local government institutions and other stakeholders to enable operations to be executed effectively.

At the national level the project is supporting staff development of the technical departments of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and other relevant stakeholders. At this level, capacity development has been in technical areas such as land administration, surveying, valuation, physical planning, monitoring and evaluation and financial management.

At district level, focus has been on strengthening the existing governance structures necessary for effective implementation of the project e.g. training of District Training Teams, DEC, Accounts Personnel and Area Executive Committees.

At local level, the focus has been on governance such as facilitation and training of beneficiary groups, PMCs and COCs.

The component also distributed 5,000 leaflets on HIV/AIDS which included information on Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), Anti-retroviral Therapy (ART) and the National HIV/Aids Policy. 100 copies of a newsletter on HIV/AIDS were also distributed to potential beneficiaries. This material was sourced from National Aids Commission (NAC).

Special sensitization meetings were held in conjunction with the Anti Corruption Bureau in Machinga and Mangochi covering 26 Traditional Authorities. The interest shown by the communities on the project is a result of sustained sensitization efforts of the Capacity Building component working closely with District Assemblies.

Project Impact

Table 1 shows that average maize production per household among beneficiaries had increased from 200kg (at their original home in 2004/05) to 1452kg (in their relocated areas in 2005/06). The level of increase and the magnitude of production for 2005/06 are far much greater than the control groups. This was primarily due to increased land and use of fertiliser and good seed which resulted in increased yield. Figure 4 shows the

significant yield increases have been experienced for different crops especially maize and cassava.

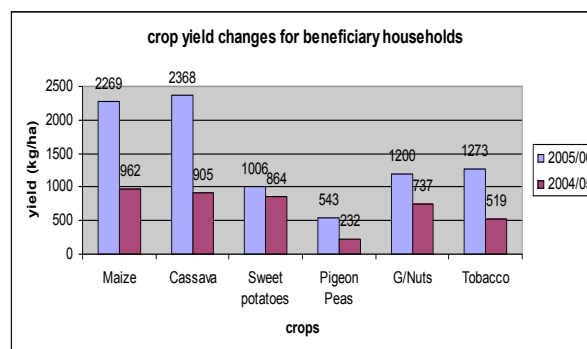
Food security has improved from lasting only 3.6 months to 10.7 months.

The proportion of households with household assets such as radios and bicycles has increased.

Mean gross margin for hybrid maize had increased from MK2, 625.00 to MK27, 265.00 per hectare prior to relocation (2004-05) and after one year of relocation (2005-06), respectively.

The average annual households incomes for beneficiary households have moved from MK54,000 before relocation to around MK88,000 after one year of relocation.

Figure 4: Yield changes for beneficiary households for Main Crops



Source: PWHC Impact Study Final Report, January 2007

Table 1: Comparison of Maize production (kg) for the different groups before and after relocation

Group	Year	Mean	Number	Minimum	Maximum
Beneficiary households	2005/06	1452	24	350	4700
	2004/05	200	28	5	750
Surrounding communities	2005/06	411	49	50.00	2000
	2004/05	231	56	25	1050
Household in vacated area	2005/06	394	73	50	2100
	2004/05	324	94	50	3500
Long term control group	2005/06	267	78	50	1350
	2004/05	207	101	25	850

Source: PWHC Impact Study Final Report, January 2007

Box 3: Lessons learnt

- With proper assistance, community groups can negotiate for land and relocate themselves, even across districts.
- The decentralized and participatory project implementation arrangements of the CBRLDP have the potential to be scaled up nationally.
- Districts differ sharply in the availability of land. Scaling up has to carefully identify the most likely receiving districts and prepare their capacity for managing the inflow of BGs.
- Inadequate capacity in land administration, surveying and titling could become the major constraint for scaling up. Government needs to explore further ways to simplify procedures and requirements, and strengthen capacity at the central and decentralized level.
- Expiring leases present both an opportunity and a risk. The opportunity is that owners whose lease payments are in arrears and/or who do not properly utilize their estate, may not apply for a renewal of the leases, or their applications may be rejected. Such land would then become public land. The risk arises because public land all over the world is often rapidly occupied, since there is no owner to protect it from illegal occupation, and governments rarely have the capacity to protect it. Therefore, settlement of these estates could turn into a free for all with the land going to stronger and better off people, rather than to land poor and food insecure households. Government needs to study the operational modalities and capacities by which it would make use of such land for poverty reduction.

Limitation and challenges

The project has faced a number of implementation challenges at different levels. Corrective measures to address them have been taken. These challenges include the following:

- Lack of beneficiaries' access to clean water and other social facilities such as schools for young children. Government, through its various agencies, will provide social amenities. District Assemblies are required to include such services in their Public Sector Investment Programmes (PSIPs).
- Unavailability of land in Mulanje and Thyolo (districts with high population pressure) is affecting the rate of beneficiary groups' relocation as LPOs spend most of their time in the other districts of Machinga and Mangochi facilitating the identification and acquisition of idle estate land. The Project will continue interacting with estate owners with the hope that some

may see the importance of selling part of their land to the Project for relocation of beneficiaries.

- The use of sketch plans in granting Title Deeds in estates being offered prolongs the land acquisition process as the estates have to be surveyed to ascertain land area. In addition scattered and outdated information on land is hampering speedy processing of beneficiary land acquisition applications. Government should enforce the requirement that estates whose leases were granted on the basis of sketch plans are properly surveyed as soon as possible. This is critical especially that Government will soon automate land registries.
- Delays in processing survey data for production and approval of Deed Plans leading to slow pace of Group Land Title transfers. Government has taken corrective measures. For instance, processing of data is now done in Lilongwe instead of regional office in Blantyre under close supervision of senior management of the Department

of Surveys. This arrangement also facilitates examination of deed plans. In addition the Department will soon receive delivery of software, which will facilitate production and examination of deed plans.

- Reduction of farm development funds especially for smaller groups, due to use of FD funds for provision of water to beneficiaries. The steps taken by Government under 1 also apply here.
- Concealment of indebtedness by estate owners who offer land for sale is another challenge faced by the project as arrangements have to be made on how to clear the debt before proceeding with the sale. This will be dealt with through IEC messages.
- Limited access by BGs to extension services that has negative repercussions on technology adoption. Temporary consultants have been hired and have been advised to work closely with District Assembly officials.
- Participation of female-headed households is low. In the baseline of 50 BGs only 99 (20%) of the 488 beneficiary households are headed by women. A head count of 72 BGs by the PMU also confirms this finding. This is despite considerable emphasis in the IEC and training programs on gender inclusion, the mandatory inclusion of women in the Community Oversight Committees (COCs), and the Project Management Committees (PMCs) of each community. However, lack of an effective Management Information System (MIS) prevented early identification of this trend. A timely analysis of the difficulties of female headed households in the application and relocation process was not done. The PMU has also commissioned a study to assess the socio-cultural reasons for the low participation of female headed households.

Considerations for scaling up and Conclusion

A midterm review (MTR) for the CBRLDP was conducted from 18th to 29th March 2007. The Mission concluded that, “The project is having profound impact in the newly resettled areas. Relocated BGs have brought the farms they have bought into agricultural production. However due to slow start in the first two years, it was highly unlikely that sufficient numbers of beneficiaries can be relocated during the coming 2 years to achieve the target 15,000 by the closing date of the project.” Consequently, a one year extension was proposed in order to relocate the targeted number of beneficiaries but also to have impact data for three years. The decision to scale up the Project will be based on impact evaluation.

The Government is agreeable to the one-year extension and is consulting on how to source funding for the extension.

Government will have to make a detailed assessment on landlessness or land poor and land availability in various districts in order to decide how the scaling up should be implemented.

Government needs to strengthen the capability of the Surveys Department in order to cope with the expected volume of work once the Project is scaled up.

Automated land registries would be essential for speedy verification of information on estates offered for sell to the project.

The project is having profound impact in the newly resettled areas. Relocated BGs have brought the farms and are now engaged in meaningful agricultural production. This level of production could be sustained in the coming years if farmers re-invested some of their proceeds into farm inputs. The benefits have also spilled over into the surrounding communities in form of demand for casual labour and purchase of

various goods and services by the BGs, while some have also gained access to the new water points put in place by the BGs.

If this trend is maintained, it will significantly improve the quality of life for the beneficiaries and the surrounding communities

Given the low level of achievement so far, it is unlikely that the Project will be able to relocate the target number of beneficiaries within the remaining project period for a number of reasons: (i) BGs can only relocate during the dry season; (ii) non-availability of land in Thyolo and Mulanje; (iii) lengthy land acquisition processes (although it has been streamlined from 9 to 4 months); and, (iv) Inadequate capacity levels at Ministry of Lands Headquarters, PMU and District Assemblies due to the proven complexity of the relocation processes.

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Annex 1: List of acronyms

ADC	Area Development Committee
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AWPs	Annual Work Plans
BG	Beneficiary Community
CBRLDP	Community Based Rural land Development Project
COC	Community Oversight Committee.
CSC	Christian Service Committee
DA	Districts Assemblies
DADO	District Agriculture Development Officer
DC	District Commissioner
DEC	District Executive Committee.
DGA	Development Grant Agreement
DTT	District Training Team
FAT	Field Appraisal Team
FD	Farm Development
Ha	Hectare
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDA	International Development Association
IEC	Information Education and Communication
LAFD	Land Acquisition And Farm Development
LPO	Lands Project Officer
LRP	Land Reform Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy.
MIS	Management Information System
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAC	National Aids Commission
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistics Office
NTAC	National Technical Advisory Committee
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PMC	Project Management Committee
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
VDC	Village Development Committee
VTC	Voluntary and Counselling