TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS ................................................................................................................. 1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .............................................................................................................. 3
FOREWORD ................................................................................................................................. 4
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ....................................................................................... 5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ............................................................................................................. 7
1. MALAWI NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS ................................................................. 11
   1.1 Background and Context ......................................................................................... 11
   1.2 Introduction ................................................................................................................. 12
   1.3 The Consultation Approach and Methodology ....................................................... 13
   1.4 Identification and Selection of Stakeholders ......................................................... 13
   1.5 Organization of the Report ....................................................................................... 17
2. KEY FINDINGS AND EMERGING ISSUES ............................................................. 18
   2.1 Governance and Accountability ............................................................................. 18
   2.2 Infrastructure Development .................................................................................... 23
   2.3 Agricultural Development and Food Security ....................................................... 28
   2.4 Access to and Quality of Education ....................................................................... 33
   2.5 Health Service Delivery .......................................................................................... 37
   2.6 Private Sector Development .................................................................................... 38
   2.7 Environment, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change ................... 42
   2.8 Science, Technology and Communication ............................................................ 44
   2.9 HIV and AIDS .......................................................................................................... 45
   2.10 Capacity Development ........................................................................................... 48
   2.11 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment ....................................................... 49
   2.12 Population Dynamics and Development ............................................................... 53
3. “THE MALAWI WE WANT”: SPECIAL AND VULNERABLE GROUPS ....................... 56
   3.1 Widows and Single Mothers ..................................................................................... 56
   3.2 Children ....................................................................................................................... 58
   3.3 People with Disabilities (PWD) ............................................................................... 62
   3.4 Elderly People ............................................................................................................ 64
   3.5 Parliamentarians ....................................................................................................... 66
   3.6 E-Consultations ....................................................................................................... 66
   3.7 Priority Areas and People’s Commitments ............................................................... 67
4. CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................................. 78

ANNEXES ........................................................................................................................................... 80
Annex I: List of Persons and Organisations Contacted ................................................................. 80
Annex II: Reports on Consultations Done by Others ................................................................. 80
Annex III: Validation Workshops Report ...................................................................................... 80
Annex IV: Matrix of thematic areas, emerging issues, strategies and implementable actions ...... 81
Annex V: References ......................................................................................................................... 81
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In December 2012 the Government of Malawi (GoM), through the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD), with the support of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), commissioned Development Consulting Associates (DEVCAS) to undertake and coordinate the Stakeholders’ Post 2015 Development Agenda Consultation Process. The primary aim of these country consultations was to stimulate an inclusive bottom-up and participatory debate on a post 2015 development agenda regarding the “Future We Want”. These consultations were conducted with a wide-range of stakeholders through face-to-face interviews, focus groups, round table discussions, e-consultations and the media. The Consulting Team comprised the following: Graham Chipande (PhD), Augustine Y. Bobe, Charles B. Jumbe (PhD), Venge Nyirongo, Ian Simbota, Diana Mataya, Sosten Mphedwa, Joyce Grevulo, Peter Mkandawire, Judy Santhe, Davis Mtsendero, Villa Chirambo, and Ellen Bwanali.

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The views expressed in this report are entirely those of the consultants.

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FOREWORD

This report is a compilation of the outcome of the consultations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and reflects the country’s vision as seen through the eyes and minds of Malawians of all walks of life. It presents aspirations of the citizenry ranging from grassroots constituents such as, villagers, orphans, widows, persons with disabilities, the elderly, the youth, traditional leaders, women, and school going children, to national voices of civil society organizations, public and private sector officials, religious leaders, members of Parliament, political parties and central government decision makers. Malawians have expressed commitment to realizing “The Malawi We Want” and have presented a challenging development agenda for the next 10 years or so to both the present and future governments as well as Development Partners.

In this respect, the report provides the foundation for social, economic and environmental well-being of Malawians in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and highlights 12 Priority Areas for Actions, namely: Good Governance and Accountability; Infrastructure Development; Agriculture and Food Security; Access to and Quality of Education; Access to and Quality of Health Services; Private Sector Development; Environment, Natural Resource Management, and Climate Change; Science, Technology and Communications; HIV and AIDS; Capacity Development; Gender Equality and Women Empowerment; and Population Dynamics and Development. The post-2015 development framework should therefore address these areas in an integrated manner.

I would like to thank the people of Malawi who were consulted both at the National and District levels. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and the United Nations System in Malawi for guiding and facilitating the national consultations.

Let me also congratulate the consultants - Development Consulting Associates (DEVCAS), the Technical Working Group, the Steering Committee and all those involved in the post 2015 Development Agenda processes.

Finally, I would like to thank Her Excellency the State President, Dr. Joyce Banda, for entrusting me with the responsibility of championing the development of the Post 2015 development agenda for Malawi.

It is now our collective responsibility to build on the 12 Priority Areas for Actions and ensure social, economic and environmental well-being of all Malawians as articulated in this report. I would like to call on all Malawians to take responsibility in shaping the “Malawi We Want”.

Right Honourable Dr. Justin Chimera Malewezi

RETIRED VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI AND NATIONAL CHAMPION FOR THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR MALAWI
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADC  Area Development Committee
ADMARC Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
AEC  Area Executive Committee
AFDB African Development Bank Group
AFORD Alliance for Democracy
AIDS Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ART Anti-Retroviral Treatment
ARV Anti-Retroviral Drugs
CBO Community-Based Organization
CC  Climate Change
CDF  Constituency Development Fund
CEPA Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy
CONGOMA Council of Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi
CSO Civil Society Organization
CT  Consultation Team
DA  District Assembly
DAS District Assembly Secretariat
DC  District Commissioner
DEC District Executive Committee
DEVCAS Development Consulting Associates
DFID United Kingdom Government’s Department for International Development
DRR Disaster Risk Reduction
ERP Economic Recovery Plan
ESCOM Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi
FBO Faith-Based Organization
FDI Foreign Direct Investment
FEDOMA Federation of People with Disabilities in Malawi
FISP Farm Input Subsidy Program
GDP Gross Domestic Product
GFATM Global Fund Against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GoM Government of Malawi
HCT HIV Counseling and Testing
HDI Human Development Index
HIV Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ICT Information and Communication Technology
IT Information Technology
LDF Local Development Fund
MANET+ Malawi Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS
MCCCI Malawi Confederation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry
MCP Malawi Congress Party
MCTU Malawi Congress of Trade Union
MDG Millennium Development Goals
MDGR Millennium Development Goals Report
MEGS Malawi Economic Growth Strategy
MEPD Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MGDS Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MHRRC Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre
MIAA Malawi Inter-Faith AIDS Association
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With 2015 fast approaching and the implementation of the MDGs coming to an end, the United Nations, its development partners and its implementing partners alike, need to agree on what development priorities various countries should focus on beyond this period. Malawi has been selected as one of 50 countries where consultations on post-2015 have taken place to solicit information that is expected to inform the “post-2015 development agenda”.

In December 2012 the Government of Malawi and the United Nations, commissioned DEVCAS, a local consulting firm, to undertake national consultations with the objective of stimulating an inclusive, bottom-up and participatory debate on a post-2015 development agenda.

The consultations took place both at the National and District levels, targeting central Government decision makers, Parliamentarians, Political Parties, CSOs, private sector representatives, local Government Authorities, traditional Leaders, CBOs, FBOs, women, youths, children, people with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS, the elderly, orphans, divorced and widowed women, and other vulnerable groups.

The District and National level consultations took place from 11th January 2013 to 15th March 2013. At the District level, 13 of the 28 Districts in Malawi were purposively selected, such that they accurately represented the social, economic, cultural, regional and ethnic diversity of Malawi. A total of 3,938 persons countrywide were consulted by DEVCAS and/or UN agency managed consultations, 47.9 per cent of whom were female.

The main tools for collecting primary data for the consultations was through key informant interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries, to solicit people’s views on the future they want. In addition to face-to-face interviews, e-consultations (website, Facebook, radio) were used to capture views of the wider Malawian society on the Post 2015 Consultations.

From national and district consultations, the following key issues emerged:

**Governance and Accountability:** Key issues which emerged out of this theme included lack of transparency and accountability; lack of transformative leadership; politicisation of the development agenda; weak inter and intra party democracy; weak local governance; the need for fiscal decentralization; coordination of development efforts and stronger representation by Members of Parliament (MPs); and the role of traditional leaders.

**Infrastructure development:** The state of infrastructure development is recognized as a binding constraint on Malawi’s development. Key areas needing attention include roads infrastructure (particularly rural feeder roads); energy supply (electricity); information, communication and technology; and water and sanitation.
Agricultural Development and Food Security: It was emphasized that as an agro-based economy, the country would not develop unless supported by the good performance of the agricultural sector and improved food security. In this respect, key issues that emerged in the consultations included: agricultural policy development; access to fertilizer and modern inputs; irrigation development; marketing and pricing reforms; research, extension and farmer linkages; land tenure reforms; mechanization, commercialization and diversification; and food security.

Access to and Quality of Education: Stakeholders would like to see all levels of education improved and education be prioritised as an enabler for the development of the nation. Access to, and quality of education in the country are being hampered by inadequate infrastructure (classrooms, teachers houses, toilets, water); inadequate and unqualified teachers; insufficient learning materials; long distances; low literacy levels and insufficient curricula. The need for an inclusive education system, addressing special needs of children with disabilities, also came out as priority. Among young people, improvement of education, both in terms of access and quality, was identified as the highest priority for a post 2015 development agenda.

Health Service Delivery: The provision of health services in Malawi is said to be faced with a number of challenges, including poor and inadequate infrastructure, lack of drugs and medicines, inadequate and poorly trained personnel, and poor access to maternal health services. The high level of maternal deaths and early marriages were specifically highlighted as an area of concern which is compounded by the long distances pregnant women have to cover to get to a health facility with a skilled health worker. The need for adolescent-friendly health services were also mentioned, particularly among young people. Unsafe abortion among young girls due to the high numbers of unplanned pregnancies is also an issue.

There is need to cater for the requirements of people with special needs such as the elderly, PLHIV, and PWD, and ensure that health services are delivered in friendly and conducive environments for everyone. Health service delivery should also incorporate reproductive health issues to ensure universal access to reproductive health services, and to sensitise families on the consequences of having very large families. The procurement system for medicines needs to change in order to reduce government expenditure and increase efficiency in service delivery of public hospitals. At the same time, cost sharing in hospital needed to be promoted and subsidies reduced at hospitals, so that people should contribute towards provision of health services.

Private Sector Development: The importance of the private sector in Malawi was recognized by all typologies of respondents. It was indicated that currently the sector was being hampered by a number of constraints in the following areas: macro-economic stability; sectoral policies; infrastructural development; and entrepreneurship development. This has led to lack of employment creation and issues to do with non-inclusive growth and broad based development.
Environment, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change: In all consultations, respondents noted poor governance in the areas of environment, natural resource management, climate change and water and sanitation, as one major cause of underdevelopment in the country. Inadequate funding for environmental management; poor policy formulation for the sector; insensitivity to environmental issues by other sectors; and lack of respect and protection of environment and natural resources e.g. wetlands; outdated laws and regulations, poor environmental impact management, especially arising from mining operations; and a lack of capacity to manage climate change issues were raised as key concerns to be addressed.

Science, Technology and Communication: While the importance of harnessing new scientific knowledge and approaches, and integrating technological and communication tools into Malawi's development agenda priorities and goals were well recognized, the biggest problem was felt to be the multiplicity of actors in the sector with no policy coordination mechanisms and efforts, as well as a lack of supporting infrastructure such as electricity and telecommunications systems. Malawi was also said to lack adequate and well motivated human and capital expertise in key areas such as mathematics and sciences to support national development priorities.

HIV and AIDS: Although the MDG on combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases is said to be one of the four MDGs Malawi is likely to meet by 2015, there are a number of challenges that are still to be overcome. These include high prevalence rate of HIV and AIDS (10.6 per cent HIV prevalence for Adults aged 15-49); with more women and girls infected and affected than their male counterparts; high mortality rates associated with the pandemic; shortage of drugs; lack of adequate and qualified staff; inadequate support services and infrastructure, and stigma and discrimination suffered by PLHIV. Stigma and discrimination is more pronounced among women and girls and other vulnerable populations and in some cases, affects their access to HIV programmes and services due to fear and reprisals.

Capacity Development: Respondents called for a holistic approach to capacity development, embracing human resources development, institutional development, as well as addressing policies that promote a conducive environment for people and institutions to function effectively. Particular attention should be placed on the need to strengthen capacity in the public service for service delivery, through merit based recruitment and appraisal, training, and institutional strengthening.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Gender Equality remains one of the eight MDGs that is unlikely to be met by Malawi by 2015. Despite efforts by the GoM to improve equality between men and women in decision-making, it was expressed that there needs to be a greater focus on empowering women to be self-sufficient and have their voices heard. The second most critical issue for the attainment of gender equality, expressed during the consultations, was the need for the enforcement of policies and laws that protect women and girls from harassment so that they can freely participate in socio-economic activities in their communities, including obtaining a decent
education. Gender inequality cuts across other areas as well. Due to power imbalances, women and girls suffer disproportionately in terms of access to and control over resources in all sectors making their right to participate in development minimal.

**Population Dynamics and Development:** Development gains – whether economic growth, food security or the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – will remain fragile and will not meet required levels due to the increased pressure of a growing population on a limited resource base. Given the current expenditure requirements for providing health and education services and the level of revenues collected by Government, any population increases are going to negatively impact the quality of services. During the consultations, issues of rapid population growth and its effects on land and environmental degradation were a recurring issue. Malawi’s population has grown three times since independence. During the consultations, community leaders highlighted the reduction in land holding sizes as a demonstration of how population growth is putting pressures on land. The same was highlighted in social services, which continue to be inadequate. Young people felt they were excluded from development, despite being a majority.
1. MALAWI NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

1.1 Background and Context

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) established the benchmarks for the global development policy in 2000 with targets expiring in 2015. Although much progress will have been made, many targets will not have been met, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. With 2015 fast approaching and the implementation of the MDGs coming to an end, the United Nations, its development partners and its implementing partners, are looking at what development priorities various countries should focus on beyond 2015.

Malawi was selected as one of 50 countries where consultations on post 2015 were to take place in order to solicit information that will inform the post-2015 discussion on the “Future We Want”. The criteria for the selection of Malawi included regional representation, development status, country challenges and efforts towards poverty reduction.

This assignment was not intended to assess progress towards the achievement of MDGs in Malawi or the outcomes from the implementation of Malawi’s National Development Strategies, in that it is forward looking and involving the aspirations of ordinary people. Nevertheless, efforts were made to draw lessons on what has happened in the implementation of MDGs and MGDS I, in terms of what has worked and what has not. This is largely because, national development blue prints, such as the PRSP and MGDS I and II have been vehicles for translating MDGs objectives of improving well-being of all its people and reducing poverty in Malawi. That is any future strategies to improve the welfare and reduce poverty of Malawians, should avoid the pitfalls of the MDGs and of the national development strategies.

Despite recent economic growth, Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the world. In rural areas, where most of the consultations were undertaken, poverty is endemic. Malawi’s Human Development Index is 0.418, which gives the country a rank of 170 out of 186 countries (HDI 2012). The HDI of Sub-Saharan Africa as a region is 0.463, placing Malawi below the regional average (UNDP)\(^1\). This includes also high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition among children.

Although some progress has taken place in reducing the incidence of poverty in Malawi, the measure of the poverty head count has declined by a mere 3.2 per cent from the 2000 baseline of 53.9 per cent to 50.7 per cent in 2011/12\(^2\). At the same time, the poverty gap ratio currently stands at 18.9 per cent against a 2015 target of 8. Challenges still remain in reducing income inequality and increasing productive employment. Similarly, while the MDG on improving maternal health is unlikely to be achieved as the maternal health indicators for Malawi have generally remained poor.

\(^1\)http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/MWI.html

\(^2\)In fact, some reversals have been experienced on the poverty head. Ultra poor population increased from 22 per cent in 2005 to 25 per cent in 2011. This is attributable to a number of factors, including the reduction in disposable income for farmers due to poor tobacco prices; increase in petroleum prices and continued scarcity of fuel which led to increase in general prices as a result of increase in transportation costs; and foreign exchange shortages, and intermittent electricity supply which led to contraction in production by factories and consequently loss of jobs (Malawi, MDGR, 2012).
over the last decade, there has been a general reduction in maternal deaths over the past few years. In fact, Malawi is hailed as one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa that has experienced dramatic reduction in maternal deaths due to a number of policy interventions (MDGR 2012).

It goes without saying that national, sub-national and sector-wide policies, as well as resource flows, have had an impact on the successes and failures witnessed on a number of the MDGs. As such, these consultations did not focus on the MDGs achievement trends, but rather on the impact of macroeconomic and sector-wide policies on the people of Malawi and their vision ahead. In a way, the post MDGs agenda for Malawi provides a great opportunity to re-awaken the spirit of Malawi Vision 2020.

1.2 Introduction

In August 2012 the Government of Malawi (GoM) through the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD), in collaboration with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), initiated the process of planning its national level consultations and identification of key issues for the women and men, boys and girls of Malawi. The process involved a series of strategies and approaches to allow Malawians to have various opportunities to express their vision while at the same time focusing on key groups often excluded by mainstreaming processes such as children, youth and women.

In order to reach these groups, and to support the overall stakeholder’s post 2015 development agenda consultation process with the Government, a consultancy company was recruited. The consultant was required to work in close coordination with ongoing consultative processes supported by the Government, CSOs and UN partners in Malawi.

The consultancy firm was assigned to undertake the consultations at two main levels, namely, the National and District levels. At the national level the consultations targeted central government decision makers, civil society organizations (CSOs), political parties, and Private Sector. At the District level the consultations targeted Local Government Authorities, Traditional Leaders, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), women, youths, people with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS, business persons, opinion leaders and other vulnerable groups. In addition, a number of parallel processes were organized with the support of relevant UN and Government Agencies, engaging specific groups such as children, women and girls, and other stakeholders. A thorough consultation process targeting children, adolescents and youth was conducted concurrently with consultative techniques specialized for this group, reaching 2,110 young people in six districts. This report attempts to synthesize the inputs received throughout this diverse of process as well as the true richness of the individuals who shared their ideas and dreams.

The main purpose of the consultative process was to stimulate an inclusive, bottom-up and participatory debate on the future we want with focus on including groups which are not usually involved in planning and developing the development agenda for the country.

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3 This process was led by UNICEF with support of NGOs such as Save the Children. Districts where consultation took place were Rumphi, Mzimba, Lilongwe, Mchinji, Zomba and Mulanje.
Specific efforts were made to reach various diverse groups of individuals as well as representatives of more excluded groups at the local community level including but not limited to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Persons with Disabilities, Women and Women’s groups, Youth and Children, Private Sector and Trade Unions.

1.3 The Consultation Approach and Methodology

While the scope of the UN designed consultations was much wider, covering a wide array of issues from policy formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes, with the view of scrutinizing the above issues to see the extent to which the various processes were inclusive, the Malawi consultations were narrowed down, focusing on gaining inputs from the people of Malawi regarding the future they want and capturing their voices and dreams. This was agreed to be the best strategic approach given the variety of already existing evaluation and analysis of the MDGs implementation in Malawi and the limited timeframe.

At the same time, the consultations were cognizant of the fact that whilst the MDGs may appear as stand-alone goals, a proper analysis was needed to take into account an understanding of the multi-sector links between all goals, targets and indicators, including the cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment and capacity development. The consultations also ensured that synergies were created with on-going, upcoming or recently concluded processes that could be of relevance to the post-2015 country consultations. In this respect, these consultations were designed to feed into the ongoing national planning exercises such as the recently launched MGDS II and the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), and took on board development partners programmes of assistance to Malawi, including the World Bank, The European Union, African Development Bank, DFID, and the UN, as well as any consultation processes planned at national, sub-national or regional level, in collaboration with development partners.

1.4 Identification and Selection of Stakeholders

There were several approaches taken in identifying the respondents for the consultation process, which, as indicated, took place at two levels, national and district. While most of the district and national level processes were led by the consultant team, parallel and nationwide national consultations were undertaken, supported by three UN Agencies, namely, UNICEF, UNAIDS, and UN Women in collaboration with key Government Ministries and Civil Society Organizations. The findings of these consultations are incorporated into and complement this report. These Agency supported national consultations assure a wider coverage of the population in Malawi across certain specific special vulnerable groups such as children, adolescents and youth, women and girls. At District Assembly level, the District Commissioner (DC) assisted the team of consultants in identifying individuals and groups to be consulted. These consisted the District Executive Committee (DEC), comprising of the DC, senior members of the DC’s Office and senior members of line Ministries represented at the District, prominent business people, NGOs and CBOs operating at the District level. Where possible, DEC members were interviewed as key informants. However, where this was
not feasible, they were interviewed as a focus group. Consultations took place at the District Headquarters.

Image 1: Mulanje DEC members posing for a photo after the consultation

The national level consultations followed a determination of key institutions in Malawi that represent the voices of particular groups of people. By this, the team worked through a profiling process to identify national-level organizations that work with specific groups of people such as the elderly, the youth, other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, political parties, members of parliament, the private sector, farmers, people with disability, etc., to benefit from the standpoints of lobbyists of policy at the national level. A principal officer (or officers) in these institutions was approached to respond to the consultations through a key informant interview, and where possible, a focus group discussion.

The main tool for collecting primary data was through key informant interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries. The consultations focused on getting responses from the interviewees on the following three questions:

i. What do you want to see change or improve in the next 10 years or so?

ii. What is the one most important thing for Malawi in the next 10 years or so?

iii. What is one thing you will do to improve things in the next 10 years or so?

However, the stakeholders were asked additional questions to probe their responses to each of the three questions with appropriate probes to each question using the What, Why, Who, How and When framework.

Furthermore, different channels were used to widely disseminate information about the Post 2015 Development Agenda Consultation process. These included a range of media such as print (Newspapers), phone-in radio programmes and electronic (websites, blog and social media facilities).
1.4.1 National Level Consultations

Three parallel national level consultations took place between February and March 2013. To begin with, a number of National Level organizations representing Civil Society Organizations (CSOs, Private Sector, and Political Parties and Members of Parliament) were consulted. The majority of the consultations took place at the offices of the respective organizations (see Annex 1), situated either in Blantyre or Lilongwe.

In addition, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with the support of the UNAIDS Country Office consulted with 19 Malawian Youth Networks from different groups or sectors to discuss their vision on the post 2015 agenda and the future they want in ensuring youth issues are captured and articulated in the post 2015 development agenda. Another complementary consultation was organized by the Ministry of Gender, children and Social Welfare, with the support of UN Women, Oxfam and NGOGCN at which 46 women and girls were consulted on the future they want. Altogether, a total of 252 persons were consulted at this level, 214 of whom were female (84.9%).

Chart 1: National Level Consultations

1.4.2 District Level Consultations

The District level consultations took place in 13 of the 28 Districts in Malawi, purposively selected to represent social, economic, cultural, regional and ethnic diversities. The selected Districts were Lilongwe, Chikhwawa, Mulanje, Machinga, Mwanza, Ntcheu, Dowa, Mzimba, Karonga and Salima.
while the consultations with children, adolescents and youth were done in Lilongwe, Mchinji, Mulanje, Mzimba, Rumphi and Zomba.

Chart 2: District Level Consultations

In each District, two Traditional Authorities (TAs) were randomly selected from amongst whom the respondents were identified, with the help of the TA, and interviewed. Particular attention was taken to ensure that different interest groups at community level were represented. These included NGOs and CBOs working at the community level, school children, women’s groups, youth groups, men’s groups, people with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS, the elderly, orphaned children, business people and minority groups. Furthermore, efforts were made to ensure that people who participated in the consultations had access to relevant information and could provide feedback and influence the results and the process of the consultations. As indicated in chart 2, a total of 3,686 people were consulted at the district level, 45.4 per cent of whom were female.

Overall, a total of 3,938 persons countrywide were consulted, 47.9 per cent of whom were female. Out of the total, some 2,110 children, adolescents and youths (49% of whom were female) were consulted in the six districts with support of UNICEF, mostly from primary and secondary schools (Annex II)\(^4\).

\(^4\) See UNICEF, Annex II
While this report summarizes the key findings from all these consultations, further details on the parallel studies are found in the specific reports for these studies whose references are provided in this report.

1.5 Organization of the Report

This report is organized into four sections. The first section covers the introduction and background context of the national consultations, while section two presents the key findings and emerging issues. The third section highlights “The Malawi We Want”, with suggestions for priority areas and actions to be considered. The fourth and final section provides a conclusion to the report.
2. KEY FINDINGS AND EMERGING ISSUES

This section provides information on the key findings and emerging issues from the three key questions that were posed to the respondents. The responses to the questions were affected by a number of factors, namely: the level of consultations (national versus district); the socio-economic environment of the district concerned; the socio-economic status of the respondent (including level of education); and sex and age of the respondent. However, while the responses differed across the different typologies of the respondents, in terms of emphasis and specifics, there was a discernible trend in the issues that were raised. National level responses tended to dwell more on policy issues, while district level responses focused more on the challenges that the particular district faced and the personal experiences of the different typologies of respondents. This section highlights the emerging issues from the consultations.

2.1 Governance and Accountability

2.1.1 Lack of Transparency and Accountability

Under Questions 1 and 2 (what do you want to see change or improve in the next 10 years or so, and, what is the one most important thing for Malawi in the next 10 years or so), key among the issues raised by respondents was the issue of transparency and accountability, which was said to negatively affect good governance and thus constrain Malawi’s development. The transformation of the political landscape in Malawi from single party dictatorial politics to multiparty politics, a result of international donor pressure as well as internal civil strife that was geared at attainment of more expressive freedoms in the early 1990s, led to the dawning of a democratic era. However, most NGOs/CSOs noted that this transformation did not translate into a good democratic culture, with transparency and accountability as key pillars. In addition, the majority of the contributors to the phone in programme emphasised poor governance and accountability in the country as a main contributor to the country’s development problems.

A number of challenges were said to continue to affect Malawi’s democratic governance systems. One such challenge was the proliferation of political parties, as politicians, out of self interest, sought political power as a means of gaining economic power and control over national resources. As a result, political parties are said to have continued to be registered en masse, thus, providing no real options for reasonableness in the electoral process for the electorate, where about forty (40) political parties want to actively participate. This has led to opportunistic politicians seeking to gain economic benefits through corrupt practices by flouting rules, regulations and procedures with impunity, especially among the Executive, which was perceived to lack proper checks and balances. Generally, Malawi was said to lack a level playing field in the development process, including the provision of basic social services.

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5 Out of 41 responses, 24 were on Governance and Accountability.
Another reason for the weak transparency and accountability was said to be the fact that the majority of Malawians were not able to demand accountability and transparency from their leaders, largely because local governance structures were very weak. The absence of elected Ward Councillors was cited as a deliberate attempt by central government to weaken local governance and lessen coordination of local development efforts. Furthermore, Malawi was said to have a high patronage culture which led to the victimisation by the state, of individuals demanding transparency and accountability. At the same time, while effort to develop policies which are good for managing the economy and social sectors have been made, the enforcement mechanisms for such policies and associated legislation have been very weak, and continue to weaken as time goes by. In the words of one Good Governance activist:

“Transparency and accountability within the public sector has deteriorated due to interference by political interests. Laid down processes by government systems that could save money for the country need to be followed, e.g. the current out of court settlements due to improper dismissals are wasteful and need to be curtailed.”

In addition, it was observed that corruption was very serious within the Malawi society. This was not only draining resources for national development but also raising the cost of doing business in Malawi and a disincentive for development. These sentiments were echoed at all the three validation workshops, where corruption was recognised as one of the major obstacles to development. Similarly, the entrenchment of nepotism in the Malawi society was highlighted as one of the evils leading to suboptimal resource allocation in terms of human resource deployment.

“It manifests itself through rent-seeking behaviour which raises the transactions costs on many public and private activities. Corruption not only raises the costs of doing business and leads to squandering of public resources, but it is also corrosive to the national psyche. It erodes the culture of trust that is necessary for the deepening and broadening of markets. Therefore combating corruption and promoting good governance should be an integral part of the post 2015 development framework.”

The need to intensify the fight against corruption and nepotism was emphasized.

2.1.2 Politicization of the Development Agenda

One of the key challenges facing Malawi was said to be the politicization of the development agenda as development policies and strategies were said to be associated with or ascribed to particular regimes or individuals and that they were short lived and lacked continuity.

“We need political will for continuity of initiatives started by previous administration whenever there is a change in government. Most policies for combating poverty are long term therefore needs to be run through in order to get results, at the same time development should not be based on political patronage but instead should be balanced.”

At the same time, politicisation of the development agenda was said to create imbalances between political leadership and policy continuity, leading to policy reversals or abandonments. This is said to have often led to political favouritism and discrimination on political grounds. For example, the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) and food security were said to be highly politicized in their...
implementation and were often used to gain political patronage. Furthermore, it was observed that Malawi lacked a champion to spearhead the implementation of a long-term national vision.

2.1.3 Lack of Transformative Leadership

A number of Good Governance activists pointed out the need for leaders, at all levels, who were visionary and who could galvanise national resources towards long-term development. The issue of too many “recycled politicians” was also raised. It was pointed out by a respondent from one of the CSOs that:

“Malawi lacks a long-term national vision and development policies and strategies are more often associated with particular regimes or individuals, as such they are short lived and lack continuity”.

Malawi’s Vision 2020 was given as an example of a national strategy that had been largely ignored in developing medium-term development strategies due to regime changes. There was need to change people’s mindset towards transformative leadership. Establishment of a National Planning Commission, that would transcend political affiliations, was seen as one way of making sure that proper priority setting and visioning would take place. It was further pointed out that:

“such political development will ensure that the development agenda is separated from politics so that development is NOT dependent on characteristics of politicians and their parties. In addition, Malawi must have fewer political parties, i.e., two or three, as a way to unite the country better. This could be achieved by introducing periodic party registration fees”.

These sentiments were echoed by representatives of the Parliamentarians, through Chairmen of various Parliamentary Committees.

2.1.4 Weak Inter and Intra Party Democracy

One of the members of Parliament consulted observed that Malawian political parties lacked a sound democratic culture. The founder syndrome was predominant and this prevented tolerance for dissenting views, leading to expulsion of members who did not toe the founder(s) line. Because of this, accountability to the electorate was at its lowest ebb, and MPs often sought to satisfy party or personal interests at the expense of national interests.

“You cannot have a democratic nation from underdeveloped political party systems and structures”.

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6 The Malawi Vision 2020 was formulated in 1998, during the Bakili Muluzi era, as a National long-term strategic document to guide Malawi’s development over a 20 year period. However, it appears not to have inspired a number of the Medium Term Strategies such as the Malawi Poverty reduction Strategy (MPRS-2002-2005), Malawi Economic Growth Strategy (MEGS-2004-5) and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS-2006-11), which were largely influenced by short term adjustment needs and also changing priorities as perceived by the country’s leadership.
There was a widely shared sentiment among representatives of political parties that there is a need for accountable leadership in all political parties at all levels, and strong advocacy for transparent democratic practices in all political parties. One way of reducing the founder(s) syndrome is for political parties to establish reliable sources of funding for running their activities, such as membership fees, business income, etc, in addition to the allocations from the national budget.

2.1.5 Weak Local Governance

A number of District Executive Committee Members lamented the weak state of governance at the local government level, which was manifested through the absence of elected representatives, such as ward councillors. Government is urged to:

“Conduct local government elections to elect councillors that will spearhead development at community level”.

A businessman in Chikhwawa called for:

“Change in the District Administration system to introduce a town council”.

This, he said, would improve the decision making process, making it more efficient and relevant to the unique needs of the district, thus trigger the construction of infrastructure to support the town, such as markets, leisure centres, etc.

A parliamentarian pointed out that weak local governance led to over centralization, whereby key decisions and development initiatives were associated with central government, thereby alienating the periphery from such decisions and initiatives.

2.1.6 Fiscal Decentralization

Some district officials emphasized the need for strengthening fiscal decentralization in the District through strengthening the capacity of the Council to generate and manage its own resources rather than over-relying on government grants, which comprised about 85 per cent of the Council’s resources. This would lead to increased Council’s revenue to cushion the impact of insufficient funding from Government. This could be achieved by the removal of legal and administrative impediments for District Council to raise rateable revenue from properties. In order to promote optimal resource use and utilisation, improved fiscal decentralisation should be accompanied by improved efficiency of the government in releasing funds to suit the cash flow plan of the Council, thereby enhancing the implementation of district development plans.

2.1.7 Coordination of Development Efforts

It was also pointed out by a number of District Executive Committees that development efforts at the district level were often not well coordinated. There was therefore need to improve the coordination system to ensure that all stakeholders were well coordinated and that adequate capacity to manage development was improved at all levels. Development projects should be well
coordinated at district level to avoid bothering communities with contributions to projects that never materialise. Examples of such sentiments were provided in the following:

“Communities have made bricks before for a clinic that was never built;”

“Communities have dug pipe channels for water supply project which was later diverted to other users”

“Bricks have been made for school blocks but support from government was never received as promised”.

2.1.8 Representation by Members of Parliament (MPs)

Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of representation by their respective MPs, who were said to be visible during political campaign periods. Common sentiment expressed among respondents included:

“Politicians should be dedicated to representing the communities faithfully and play their development role.”

“The government should reinstate the recall provision to enable communities remove MPs that are not performing their duties.”

“There is need to improve the management of Constituency Develop Fund (CDF) and ensure transparency.”

Politicians were urged not to present the CDF as personal donations to the communities, while at the same time, traditional leaders like TAs, and Village Headmen should be educated about the fund to enable them to monitor the programme and require the much needed accountability from MPs.

2.1.9 The Role of Traditional Leaders

Many chiefs bemoaned the weak role played by traditional leaders in development. While they were supposed to be apolitical, more often they were used to push political agendas. There was need to sensitize chiefs on their role in the management of the Local Development Fund (LDF) and the CDF and empower them to request accountability. Local leaders should take ownership of development projects and monitor progress. A good example was provided in Mulanje where one of the Traditional Leaders’ active participation in development programmes led to very tangible development results and helped to galvanize local support for the same.

2.1.10 Other Governance Issues

A number of other governance issues which were touched upon included; a lack of corporate social responsibility by financial institutions; limited space for public policy debate; little respect for rules and procedures; and the role of the youth in politics. The issues of an efficient and effective civil service and the promotion of the development and implementation of home grown policies were
also touched upon. Parliamentarians emphasised the need for Parliament’s independence from the other two arms of government. This would ensure the Executive does not have too much power in running the development agenda and also increase citizens understanding of the duties of their parliamentarians. This would make them more accountable and perhaps work more effectively. It was also pointed out that:

“The constitution of the country needs to be refined and made to be more focused on the key issues. The immigration laws should also be revised.”

Emphasis was also placed on the need to consolidate democracy and democratic structures, particularly at the grassroots level where the strength of political parties should lie. In this respect, the holding of regular elections, in accordance with their constitutions, was a must for every political party. The need for change in the mindset of people and politicians, towards more inclusive democracy and self reliance was also emphasised.

Youths are perceived to get a raw deal when it came to their civic involvement in Malawian politics. Youth involvement in politics was mostly limited to providing morale at political rallies or political violence but not based on providing concrete contributions to social and economic development. There is need to change attitudes towards youth’s involvement in politics. To solve the problem, youths expressed their willingness to contribute to politics as quoted below:

“I will engage with a Member of Parliament using the available channels, such as the district meetings. Share with him/her the issues of my community in presenting the solutions and encouraging him/her to bring this at the policy level. Then, agree on a work plan and targets in order to hold him/her accountable.”

“I will share the stories, the ideas and the actions with my peers and inspire the others (become a role model). I would like to organize a national conference on issues that affect the Youth and invite the Members of Parliament.”

“I will use social media networks to influence the public opinion and become an ambassador of the Youth.”

2.2 Infrastructure Development

Issues raised on infrastructural development were very similar at both national and district levels. Four key areas of infrastructure, namely roads, energy/electricity, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), and water supply, featured very prominently. Generally, respondents emphasised the following key problems:

- A lack of proper checks for monitoring of funding and progress of infrastructure development;
- A lack of infrastructure development in rural areas; and
- A poor culture of infrastructural repair and maintenance.
At the Lilongwe Validation workshop, participants pointed out that infrastructure development is heavily politicised and urged Government that international support should only be used on infrastructure development programmes that were relevant to the local scene. In this respect, they pointed out that there should be proper checks in place for monitoring of progress and funding of infrastructure development programmes which are currently being abused. One participant said:

“Maintenance of existing infrastructure needs to be done over and above construction of new infrastructure”

A call was made for the intensification of infrastructural development in rural areas where most of agricultural activities take place in order to promote agriculture which is crucial for the economy.

2.2.1 Road Infrastructure

Parliamentarians emphasized the need for feeder roads in opening up rural areas for development activities such as agriculture, social services and businesses to ensure accessibility throughout the year. Representatives of the business community emphasised on the need for improved governance within the roads sub-sector, calling for more vigilance in project implementation so as to make construction companies more accountable to the citizenry in the provision of timely services. They also urged Government for improved project financing and remove inefficiencies in development and maintenance of roads and establishment of rules and regulations that are enforceable to ensure that contractors are held accountable. Stakeholders also raised concerns on what Malawi is losing through infrastructure projects that have been implemented but are of poor quality.

In many rural areas, respondents complained of lack of bridges. In T.A Mabuka’s area, (Mulanje), for example, crossing Lichenya River posed great problems during the rainy season, cutting off a large numbers of people from essential services like clinics, schools, maize mills and trading centres. Villagers have to resort to using a boat to cross the river and incidents of drowning are very common. Construction of a bridge across the river would definitely lead to agricultural and business development, in addition to enhancing access to social services.

2.2.2 Energy Supply (Electricity)

The importance of a stable and reliable energy supply could not be over emphasised. A representative of the business community said that:

“Without reliable energy (electricity) no long-term development in terms of investments, employment and poverty reduction will take place in Malawi”.

Malawi needs a sustainable source of energy throughout the country and adequate capacity for industrial processing, including within the expanding mining sector. The mining sector is said to have potential in developing Malawi if government provided it with adequate support, including an appropriate policy environment and infrastructural support. The issue of rural electrification, with adequate investments and an appropriate tariff system is catalytic to attracting investments and boosting rural businesses. Many rural areas complained of the scarcity of maize mills due to lack of
electricity and the very prohibitive costs associated with electricity connections. Diesel maize mills are shunned due to the very high cost of diesel.

“If maize mills are near women and children will not have to walk long distances and hand processing is very tedious”

Children noted the potential of having electricity in the rural communities, as a way of achieving higher levels of productivity and learning. School children expressed the benefit of electricity for studying during the nights. Children at Ngana in Karonga felt the need for electricity to support rural health centres so that:

“More people can be taken care of during nights, and that some medical equipment that requires electricity can be usable in rural areas”.

2.2.3 Information, Communication and Technology (ICT)

It was also indicated that Malawi needs a well developed communications sector. ICT development was identified as one area where Malawi was lagging behind. The ICT sector has been a key contributor to economic growth in Malawi, and has seen significant growth over the last decade due to major private participation in increasing the access to telecommunication services, predominantly the GSM services. However, the cost of services, largely due to lack of supporting services and infrastructure (electricity, telecommunication networks etc.) constrain accessibility of mobile communication services.

2.2.4 Water and Sanitation

Another area of interest for infrastructure development at the District level was the provision of water supply systems for households. Respondents indicated that the long distances to fetch water have been detrimental to health and progress on other productive activities due to women having to walk long distances to carry water on their heads. The time/effort saved in water collection has a huge potential for better child care, improved education and economic development where time saved can be utilized for other productive means. The National Coordinator of the Water and Environmental Sanitation Network, in reviewing this document, emphasized on the importance of the WASH sector as an “enabler” due to its linkages with the other sectors, such as agriculture, health, education and environmental management. They gave the example that, if it was assumed that an improved water point saves around 30 minutes a day in water collection time for most rural households, then potentially this could lead to a massive saving of around 250,000 person hours per day, which could be utilized in other productive activities. It was pointed out that, although efforts were made to provide most areas with boreholes, and in some cases, piped water, through the gravity fed water system; much of this infrastructure was not functional, largely due to problems of maintenance and repair. A number of respondents indicated that the management of such facilities was often not handed over to the rural communities, thereby raising the question of ownership, resulting in many instances of vandalism and neglect.

The National Coordinator pointed out that although the situation for rural water supply coverage in Malawi is better than many other sub-Saharan countries, there are still many people using unsafe
water sources such as rivers, streams and unprotected wells (around 23%). According to the NGO surveys, Malawi will likely achieve the MDG 7 target on water but it does not take into account the distance to water source (< 500 m) or number of people using the facility (< 250 per borehole). Moreover, evidence suggests that many so called protected water sources (particularly protected shallow wells and gravity schemes) still produce water that does not meet the water quality standards, such as the local bacteriological drinking water quality standards (<50 Faecal Coliforms per 100 ml)). Other problems include the degradation of water resources, inadequate financing, water demand from rapidly increasing population, insufficient institutional capacity, climate change and inadequate mitigation measures for water related disasters.

Children, on their part, were more concerned with better access to clean water and sanitation in schools through borehole construction and provision of better infrastructure for toilets and bathrooms. Primary school children at Group Village Headman Robin in T.A. Chikumbu’s area in Machinga District expressed the ambition for:

“Access to piped water for their school and communities”.

Improved access to potable water and sanitation was also mentioned as a priority need for children and youths (6-24 years) to live a normal life. The poor quality and non-functional toilets and water points was particularly a concern to children in both urban and rural areas. They said the situation has resulted in many learners using open defecation methods in nearby bushes which have been a cause of many water and air borne diseases affecting learners such as cholera, bilharzia, and dysentery. Specifically, girls cited issues such as clean toilets, provision of sanitary facilities for girls, including sanitary pads and improved water and sanitation infrastructure. The young people stated that while access to potable water and sanitation facilities has been improving over the years, they remained seriously inadequate and in most cases in poor shape in primary, secondary and tertiary schools in terms of functionality, cleanliness and appropriateness for people with physical challenges. They indicated that maintenance has generally been slow and weak due to poorly funded and organized maintenance programs leaving most of them either unusable or risky to use in terms of hygiene and strength. They also stated that poor awareness on how to use the toilets and sheer negligence among learners has to some extent caused the frequent break down of flash toilets especially in urban schools.7

Respondents also noted that children have a right to education and to a safe and healthy learning environment. Since the introduction of Full Primary Education in 1994, enrolment in primary schools has increased substantially, and facilities in schools have not been able to keep up with the demand. Inadequate WASH facilities in schools negatively affect the health and education of children. The advantages of WASH in schools are manifold: Better educated children, especially girls due to increased enrolment as a result of a safe and secure learning environment and reduced drop-out rate, especially for girls as good sanitary facilities provide a safe and private place for feminine hygiene and absenteeism is reduced as disease transmission decreases. Improvement in WASH facilities is often followed by investments in other school facilities (classrooms, teacher’s houses, school kitchens and gardens). It is an investment in the health of future generations.

7UNICEF p14
The National Coordinator also pointed out that sanitation coverage in Malawi’s primary schools is extremely low (at 23% according to the recent School WASH survey (2008)). This situation is unacceptable especially considering that the general rural improved sanitation coverage is 56%. In terms of water, the schools are faring better with 81.5% of schools using a protected water source. However, many of these are located outside the school compound (sometime the other side of a road) as they are shared with communities and only 67% of the water facilities tested provided water safe for drinking. Only 4.2% of schools have hand washing facilities with soap.

It was highlighted during consultations that some people find it difficult to access clean water in the country, hence increased cases of water borne diseases. There are inadequate protected water sources such as boreholes in most remote areas. It was therefore observed that easy access to clean water should be prioritized for Malawi to develop.

A participant of one of the validation workshops explained the importance of waste management in these words:

“Improvement in waste management is important for environmental protection”

While one of the human-rights activist dreams of:

“A clean Malawi where sanitation and hygiene carry the day”

The National Coordinator further pointed out that studies have shown that improving sanitation not only helps prevent faecal-oral disease (e.g. diarrhoea and intestinal worms) but also has a significant impact on economic growth improving GDP in developing countries by 1 – 7%. Other studies have shown that simple hand washing interventions are the most cost effective health intervention for any disease. Hand washing with soap has also proved to be effective in reducing Upper Respiratory Infections.

Access to improved latrines is estimated at 56% in rural areas. Although the level of access to basic sanitation facilities is much higher, many of these facilities are often inadequate (e.g. pit full, faeces on floor, no drop hole cover, no roof/walls). This has resulted in unsafe disposal and management of human waste posing a great threat to peoples’ health and our environment. This situation has further been compromised by the use of unsafe hygiene practices, which has resulted in high levels of water and sanitation related disease outbreaks. Information on hygiene practice is scanty but the MICS 2006 report states that only 0.1% of mothers wash hands with soap at all the critical times (e.g. before preparing food/eating/feeding baby and after toilet/cleaning baby’s bottom).

Quoted in their own words, some of the participants gave the following views:

“New technologies have to be introduced in water sector so that many have access to clean and safe water”

“Investing more on capacity building activities for the water and sanitation activities will help government to reduce its spending on preventable diseases”

“Access to clean water will improve sanitation and hygiene, thereby reducing incidences of water borne diseases”
2.2.5 Other Infrastructure

Housing featured as an important item for children as well. It was noted that most orphans indicated this need more emphatically, particularly those looking after siblings. Respondents at the district level pointed out the lack of youth support structures and facilities. A District Youth Officer for Machinga district expressed it in these words:

“The mandate of the youth department is to improve the social-economic profile of the youth in order to be good citizens. However, there are many constraints to realizing this goal. In Machinga for instance, the rate of school dropouts is high due to cultural influences and high poverty rates such that children are forced to help out their parents with farming instead of attending school. Most girls end up getting pregnant at very young ages, thereby being forced into early marriages. Such factors have affected the realization of the objectives by the youth development department.”

2.3 Agricultural Development and Food Security

As Malawi is an agricultural country, most of the respondents to the consultations indicated that the agricultural sector is the most important sector that needs to change if national development is to forge ahead in the next 10 years or so. It was emphasized that as Malawi was agro-based, it could not develop unless agriculture was doing well.

2.3.1 Agricultural Policy Development

First and foremost is the need for policy development in the area of smallholder agriculture, including the need to review the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP). It was pointed out that currently there was no comprehensive agricultural development policy and that any policies that exist were ad-hoc and scattered in various documents.

2.3.2 Access to Fertilizers and Modern Inputs

While the respondents appreciated the need for Government to provide subsidized agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and improved seeds, most of them were not happy with the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP). Respondents indicated that FISP was associated with high levels of corruption in the way it was being managed, largely because it lacked monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to verify that it was reaching the intended beneficiaries. It was also noted that fertilizer was generally too expensive for most people in the rural areas. It was further pointed out that targeted subsidies had not produced surplus food because the recipients were very poor and ended up selling the subsidized inputs in order to meet urgent needs of food and other necessities. Some traditional authorities interviewed said that the FISP was making it difficult for them to mobilize people for development projects, as non-beneficiaries saw no reason why they should take part in such projects when they were denied access to subsidized fertilizer.
With respect to FISP, it was said to be currently targeting a very small proportion of the smallholding farming community who are deemed to be vulnerable and at the same time less productive. The respondents bemoaned the current practice whereby the price of a 50 kilogram bag of fertilizer was reduced from say MK 15,000 to MK 500; just to be made available to fewer than 3% of smallholder households.

There were two main views on how best the government could approach the fertilizer subsidy issue. The first view was to:

“Stop the targeted input subsidy and introduce a generalized subsidy whereby every farmer would have access to cheap fertilizer.”

That is, at the same level of subsidy, the prices of fertilizer could be reduced to say MK 6,000 per bag so that more people could benefit and make the subsidy universal. This view was provoked by the poor performance of the subsidy programme in past years. There were several problems associated with the targeted subsidy, including corruption during coupon distribution, selling of coupons by the poor and unavailability of fertilizer in ADMARC markets. This view was supported by a number of representatives from the Malawi Parliament, as well as a representative of one of the main political parties.

The second view, largely advocated by farmers’ representatives, both at national and district level, was to:

“Make subsidized fertilizer available to organized farmers”.

In this respect, respondents reiterated the need to re-introduce farmers clubs, cooperatives, and agricultural schemes as these would promote commercialization of agriculture and facilitate industrialization through value addition. This way productivity was likely to be higher, thereby resulting in more tangible benefits to the smallholder farming community and to the nation as a whole. Respondents suggested food and cash transfers would be a better way of meeting the needs of vulnerable people (elderly, orphans, PWD, PLHIV, etc) instead of the current FISP.

At the same time, overemphasis on FISP was said to have left out other important areas such as livestock farming, extension services and use of organic manures. The programme was also said to be highly dependent on donor funding making it unsustainable. Another option, with respect to supply of fertilizer was the need to explore production of fertilizers locally, to meet domestic demands. Other respondents also urged government to encourage farmers to use organic fertilizers especially taking into account the escalating price of fertilizer and its impact on soil fertility.

2.3.3 Irrigation Development

The importance of irrigation development in changing the fortunes of the country could not be overemphasised. Particularly in Chikhwawa District, respondents were of the view that the Shire valley had the potential to be the country’s food basket if the huge water potential was harnessed. The experiences of the Nchalo sugar plantation and the Kapichira Irrigation scheme were cited as examples which could be replicated, not only in Chikhwawa, but throughout the country where water resources permitted. It was suggested that irrigation would lessen the dependence on rain fed
agriculture, thereby enhancing food security, allowing for crop diversification and income generation. Farmers in districts like Mulanje, which experience land shortage due to predominance of agricultural estates, also favoured irrigation development as it would also help to ease pressure on farm land, by allowing people to farm two to three times a year. Respondents suggested a need for investing in appropriate infrastructure, like canals, dams and suitable technology, like water pumping equipment using electricity. Thus electrification, using various options (hydro, solar, geothermal, biomass) should also be explored. At the same time, there is need to develop the necessary human resources to provide technical services in the area of irrigation development.

2.3.4 Marketing and Pricing Reforms

The respondents indicated that the current arrangements with respect to agricultural marketing and pricing were constraining agricultural development. They cited inadequate marketing facilities, low prices offered by vendors, late opening of official markets, and lack of appropriate policies for inputs marketing and pricing, which often resulted in higher production costs. Box 1 summarizes some of the key issues with respect to agricultural marketing.

The respondents also touched on the issue of marketing and pricing of agricultural produce, including livestock. They called for the re-introduction of official marketing channels, like ADMARC which is adequately resourced and has flexibility on opening their markets, to mitigate against exploitation by vendors, who often underpaid the farmers for their produce. A representative of a farmers’ group in Mzimba said:

“Promote farmers clubs and cooperatives which will empower farmers to negotiate for better agricultural inputs and produce prices, including access to agriculture research and extension”

Respondents further cited inadequate marketing facilities, low prices offered by vendors, late opening of official markets (especially ADMARC) and poor road networks.
2.3.5  Research, Extension and Farmer Linkages

The respondents also emphasized the need to improve agricultural research and extension services, through improved funding and training, and at the same time strengthen research/extension and farmer linkages. It was felt that farmer adoption of new and improved innovations was that such innovations were developed by researchers without the input and involvement of farmers, and that they were poorly disseminated by a poorly trained and inadequately funded extension service. Farmer representatives pointed out that the role of the private sector to provide research and extension services should also be explored. In countries like Kenya, it was pointed out, large estates used various out-contracting arrangements with the smallholding community, to supply them with specific quantities of produce to meet their own contractual obligations, say with export markets. As such they were obliged to provide research and extension services to the smallholding community in order to ensure quality compliance. This therefore created a “win-win” situation between the two agricultural subsectors.

2.3.6  Land Tenure Reforms

The issue of land tenure reforms was also raised as this would facilitate commercialization as well as assist with land and environmental conservation, through the enforcement of appropriate land use regulations. Government was therefore urged to promote and enforce proper land use and management regulations such as curtailment of hilltop and river bank cultivation. The land reforms should also embrace policies that will help to protect subsistence farmers from selling land to richer commercial traders and foreigners.
2.3.7 Mechanization, Commercialization and Diversification

Some respondents felt that farming processes must be mechanized and modern technologies employed. A number of issues were raised with respect to mechanization, commercialization and diversification of agriculture. These included the following:

“Government needs to establish ways of making farm equipment like tractors, ploughs, treadle pumps, farm produce processing equipment, etc., accessible since they are very expensive for an average farmer in the rural areas. This can be done through loans, subsidizing equipment prices or by providing means to farmers to rent equipment at a fee.”

“Rehabilitate already existing farm infrastructures such as dams, canals, etc., to revive irrigation farming that would facilitate diversification and commercialization of agriculture.”

“Promote value addition and processing of locally available produce, such as the processing of ground nuts to cooking oil, process mangoes into juice and jam”

“Provide tractors to agricultural schemes for farmers for hire at a fee for use in their farms”. “

“Improve access to finances for agriculture and business by opening up banks at trading centre and rural growth centres.”

“Set up of telecommunication and IT services at trading centre to improve access to information.”

“Train people in entrepreneurship before giving them loans.”

“Mechanization of farm tools to expand farm sizes through use of tractors and ploughs”

Livestock developments, and land tenure reforms, were also mentioned as areas that needed attention in order to promote agricultural development and food security. During the Blantyre Validation workshop, it was pointed out that there was need to increase the value of land by improving farm infrastructure such as irrigation facilities, dams, and land conservation.

2.3.8 Food Security

The issue of food security was raised by a number of constituents. For example, children indicated that access to food was an important element in promoting human livelihoods. Those looking after siblings felt particularly vulnerable in terms of food security. Mechanisms that sustain the availability of food throughout the year are necessary for their vulnerability to be reduced. Children attributed the levels of poverty in the rural communities as the basis for the lack of sustainable food supplies, which affects their concentration in school. A group of primary school children at Mtuwakale Village in T.A. Njewa in Lilongwe District every year attempt to grow a maize garden around the school, but has the misfortune of lack of adequate and quality inputs for a good harvest. As such, they believe that a continued school feeding program will assist significantly in keeping children healthy in the future Malawi.
2.4 Access to and Quality of Education

In terms of overall responses to questions one and two, the issue of improved access to quality education was voiced strongly by respondents. In the consultations with children, adolescents and youth, good quality education emerged as a priority need for all the three age groups (6 – 11 years, 12 - 17 years and 18 - 24 years). In many interviews, it was explained that they would like to see education levels in Malawi improved in order to bring about development. Education was prioritised as a developer in Malawi on the basis that it would improve the human resource in the country, which would bring development to all other sectors. Most interviewees expressed the view that education was essential for the success of all types of development, and that the education system should be designed to build the confidence of learners and better equip them to take up leading roles in the development of the country. Improved education would boost literacy and help people in communities to better understand development issues. The need to promote access and to protect peoples’ right to education, including vulnerable people and people with disabilities was emphasised. It was widely perceived that:

“Educated people will understand development issues better.”

“Education is taken as a key to development and there is no development that can take place without involving educated people.”

A member of a Youth Group in Mzimba observed that:

“Education is the backbone of development, such that even during application of fertilizer, one needs education”

Access to, and quality of education in the country was being hampered by a number of factors, including inadequate and inaccessible infrastructure (classrooms, teachers houses, toilets, water); inadequate and unqualified teachers; insufficient learning materials; and curricula which did not address the needs of learners (such as lack of skills development) according to many respondents.

During consultations, the key issue affecting children and youth was that of education. Many children were quick to point out some specific needs in terms of learning resources and infrastructure. They also highlighted problems of primary school dropout, especially for girls, which were due mainly to poverty and cultural factors. The children also addressed the issue of early pregnancies for girls by older men, including male teachers.

Participants agreed to the fact that access to tertiary education was a serious challenge for many youths due to low college intake. Additionally, there is a lack of Government support to the development of private universities, which would contribute to the provision of quality education.
and thereby equalize the chances of employment for graduates from private and public universities. Youth organizations concurred that the cost for acquiring tertiary education is exorbitant. On the other hand, primary and secondary education was said to be failing to foster a spirit of, and capacity for entrepreneurship among the youths to create alternatives for income generation for the after-school youths. A secondary school student in Ntcheu said,

“The youth should be well equipped with life skills by introducing entrepreneurship as a subject on its own in secondary schools. This will make them to be proactive and find ways of proper use of already available resources”

The whole education system is failing to use an innovative approach to increase access and quality of education. For example, access to college education could be improved through online education and use of modern technologies. This failure to investment in technology and associated skills has resulted in youths being less competitive in a changing world. At the same time, the frequent changes of syllabi were identified to be disturbing students as well as service delivery by teachers.

2.4.1 Inadequate Facilities

Many respondents indicated that inadequate facilities were a major bottleneck to accessing education in Malawi, at all levels of education. To begin with, the number of school blocks and classrooms is inadequate to cater for the number of children of school going age. This results in a number of problems including many school going age children being out of school; congestion in classrooms, especially at the primary school level, with teacher/pupil ratios that were well above the recommended levels; children travelling long distances to attend school; and children learning under trees or other environments which were not conducive to good learning. In some cases, even the available school blocks and classrooms were in very bad shape due to poor maintenance and lack of repair.

The need to increase the number of primary and secondary schools was expressed in almost every District. Ngabu, in Chikhwawa District, for example, was said to have only two secondary schools, while the whole of Mwanza District only had three secondary schools, far below the secondary school requirements of the two Districts. Apart from the inadequacy of schools, many areas, particularly in Districts like Chikhwawa, Dowa, Mzimba and Karonga, were inaccessible due to bad roads, long distances and poor topography, thus denying many children access to schools and therefore contributing to the high illiteracy rates in such areas. The inadequacy of teachers’ houses in many areas were said to contribute to the problem of inadequate teachers and high levels of absenteeism among teachers. A shortage of toilets is also said to be very acute in many schools. A district education official in Chikhwawa sighted an example of one primary school in the District where over 2,800 pupils shared just eight toilets. Such problems, like congested classrooms, long distances, lack of toilets and other sanitary facilities contribute to high dropout rates especially among girls and people with disabilities. In relation to an absence of appropriate infrastructure for children who are physically challenged, learners in a focus group discussion at Mzimba LEA primary school in TA M’mbelwa in Mzimba district said:
“What about our colleagues who are physically challenged, how do you expect them to go to the toilet on their own when there are inappropriate facilities? It is embarrassing for them to be escorted to the toilet where one is expected to enjoy privacy.”  

On improving sanitation facilities for girls in school, learners in a focus group discussion at Ebangweni CDSS in TA Mzikubola in Mzimba district said:

“When girls are going through menstruation, they need a special room to use at school to attend to themselves”

2.4.2 Inadequate and Unqualified Teachers

One of the key factors hampering the access to and quality of education in the country was said to be that of inadequate and unqualified teachers. Respondents in many districts stated that they did not only lack adequate teachers, but most of the teachers available were unqualified. This concern was also raised by PWD who pointed out that the number of teachers with special learning needs training was minimal, and this problem was compounded by lack of appropriate devices, such as brail, etc. On the need for qualified teachers, learners in a focus group discussion at Vonken Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) in TA Mabuka in Mulanje district said:

“One teacher was teaching at a primary school just nearby and we used to see him. Later on we noted that he started teaching at our school right here. Unfortunately, the teacher is not well versed in the teaching work. It was even better if we learners were teaching each other”

Other problems associated with inadequate and unqualified teachers include inadequate teacher training facilities, cumbersome and inefficient recruitment processes for teachers, and poor incentives for teachers, including low salaries, lack of teachers houses, no career development prospects, etc. These are particularly acute for teachers in rural areas.

2.4.3 Gender Inequalities in Access to Education

During the consultation with women and girls, it was pointed out that inequalities existed with respect to access to education between boys and girls. The participants noted that tertiary education was too costly for most families to afford. Priority to education in families is still being given to boys and as a result, most girls drop out, usually at secondary level. For the age group 12 - 17 years, they cited good education as a priority need in terms of ensuring equal opportunities for girls and boys with regard to provision of boarding facilities and scholarships which they said currently tends to favour girls.
It was also noted that safe schools for girls is a priority, especially in light of the lack of hygiene facilities, or the likelihood for girls to get molested either on the way to and from school or in the schools themselves by teachers. It was pointed out that there was need for policies that promote the education of girls even up to tertiary level to reap an increased population of educated and empowered women.

2.4.4 Other Constraints to Quality Education

While innovations at the national level, such as introduction of free primary education, school feeding programmes and removal of school uniforms led to greater access, in terms of higher enrolments, it has also adverse effects on the quality of education due to very high pupil/teacher ratios.

Respondents indicated the need to improve literacy levels in the country (currently adult illiteracy stands at 74%)\(^\text{11}\) in order to improve the uptake of innovations and improve demand driven extension services. More attention needs to be given to rural schools where a very large number of children attended school. It was also mentioned that schools should provide technical skills in order to boost industrialisation and hence reduce unemployment.

### Box 2: Suggestions from interviewees on improving education

- Government should create policies to combat unemployment and to support the education efforts;
- Construct more secondary schools and colleges to accommodate the huge numbers of students leaving the primary schools;
- Promote disability friendly schools;
- Ensure that necessary learning materials are available;
- Trained adequate experts in education sector to cater for all types of learners;
- Ensure schools have adequate and qualified teachers, especially in science and mathematics subjects;
- Improve technical education to provide necessary skills to make school leavers more employable;
- Re-introduce debating clubs, quiz competitions etc, in schools to improve communication skills; and
- Construct adequate infrastructure that supports education such as classrooms, teachers’ houses, toilets, libraries and bridges.

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Parents interviewed indicated that primary education enrolment and retention should be improved through compulsory education for all primary school children to provide the possibility of a bright future for children. However, the education system should be improved by revising the primary and secondary school syllabi to capture hand craft skills, which are important for self-employment and income generation and also directed towards making Malawi self-sufficient in all sectors.

### 2.5 Health Service Delivery

The provision of health services in Malawi is said to be faced with a number of challenges, including poor and inadequate infrastructure, lack of drugs and medicines, inadequate and poorly trained personnel, and poor access to maternal health services. Many respondents indicated that there is a need to increase and improve the delivery of health services, by providing more health service delivery points close to where people live, as well as increasing the numbers of health workers and improving their effectiveness through better training and appropriate incentive packages.

NYCOM indicated that the health services could further be strengthened by, among other things:

- **Increasing the number of health surveillance assistants (HSA) who can assist rural communities in the promotion of preventive health practices; and**

- **Introducing a new cadre, lower than the HSAs. These should be the community based distribution agents (CBDAs), mostly the youth. These have proved to make a difference in terms of increasing access to SRHR. But they are found in limited districts, where there are some projects. They need to be across the country and they should be employed, not mere volunteers in order to reduce numbers that quit due to lack of incentives. The very same reasoning government used to introduce the cadre of HAS, should be used to justify need for introduction of CBDAs.**

There is also a need to cater for people with special needs such as the elderly, PLHIV, PWD, and ensuring that health services were delivered in friendly environments for people living with special needs. Health service delivery should also incorporate reproductive health issues to ensure universal access to reproductive health services, and to sensitise families on the consequences of having large families. With one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world, respondents noted with great concern the inadequate accessibility by community members to maternal and newborn health (MNH) services due to distance, cultural practices and transport.

The procurement system for medicines needs to change in order to reduce government expenditure and increase efficiency in service delivery of public hospitals. At the same time, cost sharing in hospitals should be promoted and subsidies reduced at hospitals, so that people should contribute towards provision of health services. There was also consensus that development aid was not helping the country, as it was fuelling a dependency attitude among the people.

Children and young people raised a number of health concerns including water borne diseases, malaria, HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), diseases resulting from alcohol and drug abuse (e.g. organ damage), and increased teenage pregnancies, resulting in infant and maternal deaths.
Young people pointed out the need for the provision of youth-friendly health services, such as counselling services, improved privacy in accessing ARVs, increased availability of free condoms in health facilities, improved access to rehabilitation centres for young people addicted to drugs, alcohol and sex, and the elimination of cultural practices which facilitate HIV infection. These services are critical for reduction of premarital sex, early marriages, abortion, prostitution, teen age pregnancies, maternal and infant mortality, and HIV infection. In relation to lack of privacy in accessing ARVs for young people, learners in a focus group discussion at Buwa CDSS in TA Mlonyeni in Mchinji district said:

“*Young people feel shy to access ART together with adults. They literally know that the young people are infected with HIV. That is why many young people prefer to suffer silently*”

### 2.6 Private Sector Development

The consultations included the business community both at national and district levels. However views on the private sector were shared by all constituents of people consulted. The national level consultations raised concerns mostly on the corporate and medium enterprise levels while district level consultations tackled the medium to small enterprise levels. National level consultations focussed more on the lack of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises to flourish in the country. This condition is said to have prohibited many potential business ventures from emerging, whilst limiting existing ones from growing. Top on the list of elements contributing to lack of enabling environment were unfavourable policy and regulatory framework followed by poor infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, and water supply as well as the high cost of credit and limited access to markets. In addition, the entrepreneurship culture in Malawi needs to be further developed.

#### 2.6.1 Macro-Economic Stability

Business representatives noted that no economy could flourish in the midst of macro-economic instability. Wild fluctuations in the price level, the exchange rate, the interest rate and high tax burden serve as major deterrents to private investment. Achieving macro-economic stability should therefore be an important part of the post 2015 development framework. These sentiments were further echoed during the validation workshops. To this effect, respondents urged for the country to pursue sound macro-economic policies, including fiscal, monetary and other policies. The business community felt that Malawi had one of the highest levels of corporate tax in the region, and therefore tax reforms are needed to bring about a more conducive tax policy.

The current unsound economic environment was highlighted as another hindering factor to the development of the private sector. The volatile state of the Kwacha against major currencies due to the policies adopted to float the Kwacha frustrates the planning and budgeting efforts in the business world. The ripple effect of which has also been a high inflation rate has contributed to an increased cost of trading in the country. Respondents called for improved economic governance by way of fighting corruption to reduce costs of doing business, and improving predictability in laws, rules and regulations so as to promote an even playing field.
2.6.2 Sector Policies

Respondents indicated that despite the country having so many policies and regulations governing many sectors such as agriculture, education, health etc, these policies and regulations fail to address a business point of view and therefore become unfavourable for the profitability of enterprises. In agriculture for example, the government holds excessive rights of control over some crops like tobacco through the Special Crops Act. This has given the government power to make laws that have proven not to be conducive for business. Evidence of unfavourable policies are also traced in the lack of employing tax structures that will aim at promoting commercial activities in sectors that need to be enhanced.

While the mining sector was recognized to have great potential for improving incomes and livelihoods in Malawi, respondents felt there was need for Government to have proper policies to safeguard against exploitative agreements which benefits the mining companies more than the country.

2.6.3 Infrastructural Development

Good infrastructure in the country is also essential for business as it not only reduces the cost of trading but also promotes efficiency and effectiveness of the entire commercial sector. Poor infrastructure has crippled the development of the private sector since time immemorial and the rate of progress falls behind from the desired rate of private sector growth. Topping the list are impassable roads and unreliable electricity supply coupled with its limited availability. A lot has been done in improving the country’s road network but still more is to be done, particularly in feeder roads that directly affect distribution of agricultural commodities. Electricity generation and supply has to be developed. There was a consensus between district and national level consultations on poor infrastructure in helping to provide an enabling environment for growth of the private sector. In addition to the poor road network and electricity supply, participants at district level shared a concern of lack of lucrative markets that would help promote trade and a lack of access to information to enhance decision-making for small enterprise people in districts.

2.6.4 Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Creation

Apart from the lack of an enabling environment, the country faces a shortfall of capacity for entrepreneurship in the private sector. This not only prevents people from starting businesses but also producing the quality and quantity of goods and services needed on the market. A lack of financial capacity hinders a lot of entrepreneurs from boosting their business and even aspiring entrepreneurs from starting business especially at small and medium enterprise levels. It was pointed out that many financial institutions are not targeting small enterprises and as a result their services do not accommodate such businesses. A typical example is the requirement of collateral, which is not always available with small traders. Current strategies by government to finance small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have failed to learn from previous efforts due to a lack of effective
monitoring and evaluation systems\textsuperscript{12}. The country also lacks adequate entrepreneurship knowledge and skills for people to engage in various trades.

“The current education system is also running on outdated and therefore irrelevant curriculum that does not address the current needs of the country such as financial and business management”.

In addition to the lack of individual capacity, there are insufficient organised systems and structures such as Business Development Services and cooperatives that would help meet the individual gaps.

\textbf{2.6.5 Inclusive Growth and Broad Based Development}

The country needs to work towards reduced levels of poverty, by ensuring that money is made available through higher incomes for all citizens. This call prompts a shift towards inclusive growth aimed at decreasing growing inequalities. Only then will we realize a Malawi with good housing structures and domestic essentials such as sufficient and quality food in households and decent clothing. Interventions such as introduction of double work shifts would not only help boost people’s income but also expand economic activities so that businesses have higher consumer demand. Building the economy should involve diversification to create reliance on more sectors than just agriculture. This would help reduce unemployment and increase the tax base making Malawi more independent of donor support, i.e., a Malawi that is self-sufficient.

One way of ensuring inclusive growth in Malawi is the delivery of financial services, including banking services and credit, at an affordable cost to the vast chapters of disadvantaged and low income groups who tend to be excluded. This includes access to savings, loans, micro-insurance, payments and remittance facilities offered by the financial system and risk management and risk mitigation services, viz-a-vis economic shocks, is vital in providing economic security to individuals and families. During Validation workshops, participants pointed out that access to finances is very limited, especially to poor people. The following statistics were quoted from the FINSCOPE study of 2009.

“Only 19 per cent use banks; 7 per cent other formal means; 19 per cent informal means; 55 per cent financially excluded (unbanked), mostly rural based, female and with little education.”

“44 per cent use banks in urban areas and only 14\% in rural areas”.

“About 87 per cent of private sector waged staff still does not have a bank accounts”.

“Lack of access to financial services is more acute in poorer and less densely populated areas due to high transaction costs”

\textsuperscript{12} This mostly refers to the efforts through such organisations as SEDOM, DEMMAT, etc, which in most cases have suffered from lack of adequate financial capacity, lack of technical expertise to provide the wide range of services required for the sector, such as business development, extension services, etc. See GSB Final report, 2010.
Among the key reasons for this state of affairs were urban concentration of banking services, very limited rural presence of financial service institutions in rural areas, uneven regional/district distribution of banking services in terms of population coverage per bank office in the various regions/districts, high transactions costs for both clients and institutions, and inadequate technology to manage client and institutional risk. These called for reforms in the financial sector.

Other participants felt that another reason for the lack of inclusive development in Malawi was because certain segments of society, such as the youth, women, PWD, PLHIV, the elderly, minorities, etc, were not well integrated into the development efforts of the country. For example, participants shared a common view that the youth are insufficiently involved in development programmes. Failure to empower the youth has resulted in increased crime rates and early pregnancies among the youth. Participants from Mwanza District Prison said it in these words,

"Train youths in several skills to help them be independent hence reduce crime rate"

Unemployment was said to be quite high especially in rural Malawi. Many youths pointed out that their main problem, especially for school drop-outs, was a lack of employment. Most of them attributed their failure to get employment to the type and quality of education they obtained, which did not impart life skills like carpentry, brick laying, metal works and computer skills. The primary school leavers also stated that there is very limited access to vocational schools.

Participants further point out that there are very few employment prospects for qualified and skilled youths. This has been a result of a very weak investment culture among Malawians to reduce unemployment by increasing job creation. Another contributing factor is the lack of access to capital to establish businesses that would not only provide income to the owner but also employment to others and revenue to the government. The youth complained that previous efforts by government to finance the youth were greatly mismanaged. Such programmes were characterised by politicization; lack of transparency and involvement of community leadership; abuse by other groups; funding of unviable business ventures; and insufficient funding to fulfil financial needs and reach out to more youths. The private sector is seen not to be very keen to finance the youth into entrepreneurship. There is also little support given to youths in creation of youth links within the country and the sub-region to promote sharing of ideas and skills in entrepreneurship and investment.

"Government should increase YEDEF coverage so as to benefit many youths" (Tsabango youth group)

"Loans should be transparent and de-politicized" (Chikhwawa District Information Officers)

"The disbursement of loans should be done together with youth officers in districts in identifying and organizing business trainings to target groups of the youths .This will ensure fair distribution of loans among most youth groups which will eventually lead to reduction in unemployment levels" (Ntcheu youth).

Furthermore, data availability on employment trends in Malawi is not well established and statistics are mainly gathered through Household Surveys e.g. Welfare Monitoring Surveys, DHS, Census etc. This is a gap in the labour market in as far as the development of appropriate policies to tackle the growing concern of unemployment and youth employment in particular.
2.7 Environment, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change

In all consultations, including those at the district level, respondents said that poor governance in the areas of environment, natural resource management, climate change and water and sanitation, was one of the major causes of underdevelopment in the country. Natural resources and the environment are under stress by a variety of factors, including increasing population, poverty and capacity and governance gaps with respect to natural resource management. The validation workshops also highlighted issues that revealed weak governance links such as inadequate funding for environmental management; poor policy formulation for the sector; insensitivity to environmental issues by other sectors; and lack of respect and protection of environment and natural resources e.g. wetlands.

2.7.1 Environmental and Natural Resource Management

Respondents pointed out that the country was using laws and regulations that were outdated and weak. This posed a challenge for leaders and law enforcers in implementing strategies that would produce desired results, as such laws lacked adequate empowerment. A chief, from Mwanza District, one of the Districts facing acute environmental management threats due to charcoal selling, expressed a concern in the following words:

“When we catch villagers who cut down trees to make charcoal they challenge us that they have not broken any law and therefore walk free”

A Chief in Chikhwawa also made the following observations:

“Existing policies that aim at protecting the environment lack enforcement”

“The Department of Forestry lacks the resources to carry out this responsibility and support community initiatives with the necessary expertise”

“The major threat is caused by traders who cut down trees for sale because of the large quantities needed and not villagers who collect wood for domestic use. Recently, a trader was caught with more than 10 tons of tsanya wood en-route to Blantyre”.

Agriculture is one of the major activities that uses up much of the land in the country and as a result, environmental management should be a primary topic of consideration in the agriculture sector resulting in the country taking an angle of sustainable agriculture. Respondents felt that there is a lack of appreciation of the link between environment and livelihood, including agriculture. If citizens were more aware of the contribution of the environment to development then they would be more aggressive in employing environmental friendly farming methods or conversational agriculture.
would, for example, highlight the need to design effective exit strategies from an excessive use of fertilizer.

Recently the country has seen an increase in mineral exploitation activities. However, the development has overtaken the ability of the country in managing the environmental impact. While environmental impact assessments are a must, when embarking on mineral exploitation, there is lack of capacity in terms of expertise, equipment and resources to conduct necessary environmental impact assessments, let alone implement the recommendations. General management of exploitation activities has also lacked the full involvement of stakeholders especially from the inception stage.

People with disabilities also expressed the view that environmental changes have increased cancer threats for albinos. Land degradation is resulting in terrains that may not be conducive for people using crutches and wheelchairs.

The consensus view on environment and natural resources throughout the district consultations was that there is a general tendency of people to meet their needs at the expense of destroying the environment. This is very much possible since the policies that aim at protecting the environment lack enforcements. There was also a consensus at the national level that regulations governing exploitation of the environment and natural resources need further strengthening.

The department of forestry, which is one of the leading players in environmental management, is characterised by financial deficiencies. As a result, most communities have expressed concerns that there is very little expertise and support in managing forests and woodlands. As much as there are efforts to encourage communities to plant trees, there is lack of support to manage and care for those trees until they reach a safe age for survival without intervention.

In response to the second question, members of the sub-committee for environment and natural resource of the DEC said that the most important thing for Malawi in the next 10 years or more is:

“To achieve sustainable development of the economy through sound management and utilization of the environment and forestry resources”.

Although there are a number of policies relating to the environment, there is a serious lack of policies to promote the use of alternative sources of energy such as gas and paraffin to supplement wood and charcoal. Even now, the government has not managed to come up with strong measures against the charcoal business.

Other findings include overpopulation, which is said to be undermining all efforts to protect the environment. Participants also agreed with those at national level by pointing out the lack of capacity to conduct environmental impact assessments of mining activities going on in the country. A notable contribution reads as follows:

“All development plans need to consider environmental investments in order to address issues concerning environmental degradation”.
2.7.2 Climate Change

It was noted that despite formulation of DRR and climate change policies, the country has not done much to implement them. This is a common trend not only for DRR and climate change policies but throughout all developmental policies.

From district to district, people pointed out the lack of adequate knowledge on issues of climate change. As a result, many people who could have contributed towards managing climate change are not doing anything about it. The lack of knowledge has negatively affected planning for many people, especially farmers who greatly rely on climate conditions.

The lack of involvement of Malawi in global partnership regarding climate change management has not gone without notice. This has been cited as one of the reasons for failing to build capacity for climate change management.

A District Education Officer summaries his views as follow,

“Think globally, act locally on climate change”

In response to the second question, members of the sub-committee for environment and natural resources of the DEC also said that the most important thing for Malawi in the next 10 years or more is:

“Creation of capacity to adapt to effects of climate change on the Malawi economy arising from exploitation of natural resources”

“Awareness campaigns on deforestation should be done to communities to mitigate effects of climate change such as floods, droughts”.

“Farmers should be taught good agriculture practices for instance not cultivating on steep slopes in order to conserve environment”.

“Government should strengthen relationship with other countries to reduce the effects of climate change together as effects are not localized but global”.

2.8 Science, Technology and Communication

The importance of science and technology was recognized by GoM as early as the 1970s when it established the National Research Council of Malawi (NRCM) in 1974. It was only in 1990 that Malawi developed a National Science and Technology Policy (NSTCP) which was adopted in 1991. Despite the existence of the NSTP, a number of respondents indicated that although the policy is widely accepted, the policy has not been implemented fully and some of the reasons that have contributed to this situation are:

- The country’s pluralistic approach in the management of science and technology;
- Lack of integration of the policy in overall development plans of government;
• Lack of human, financial and material resources; and
• Lack of necessary supporting legislation.

While NRCM is supposed to: “Promote and coordinate the development and application of research”, it has not been able to effectively fulfil this function, largely because it does not have the power to influence budgetary considerations. At the same time, NRCM is said to have been plagued with instability and uncertainty since its establishment.

Because of these problems, respondents pointed out that all aspects of science and technology in Malawi have stagnated. For example, at the UN Post 2015 Town Hall meeting, the following sentiments were expressed:

• Malawi is lagging behind in the area of ICT;
• Very few tele-centers to facilitate efficient telecommunications;
• Improved ICT will lead to more and better information sharing.

More importantly, there are weak linkages between the various sectors/organizations with the responsibility to promote and harness the usage of science and technology. From example, weaknesses in the education sector, arising mostly from lack of adequate funding; lack of qualified and motivated staff, especially in science and mathematics; lack of equipment; etc, mean that innovations that were supposed to be generated from the sector, are not able to materialise and benefit other sectors like agriculture, manufacturing and health, to name but a few. Similarly, weaknesses in ICT, manifested by the limited number of tele-centers to facilitate efficient telecommunications, have not led to improvements in access to information on markets and prices for farmers and traders.

Science and technology was also said to be hampered by lack of supporting infrastructure such as electricity and telecommunications; as well as equipment such as computers. Respondents also pointed out that:

“Children should be introduced to computers at a tender age”.

This would greatly facilitate the emergence of a technologically oriented future generation.

2.9 HIV and AIDS

Two key organizations working in the area of HIV and AIDS, in addition to PLHIV found in the 10 districts, were consulted with respect to the key issues on PLHIV. These were the Malawi Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS (MANET+) and the Malawi Inter-Faith AIDS Association (MIAA). These two network organisations were representing not only people living with HIV and AIDS, but also organizations involved with HIV and AIDS work. Both organizations firmly expressed that AIDS is serious in developing countries, particularly in Africa, as per its nature of being a socio-economic phenomenon. For Malawi, where infections affect 10.6% of the population, that definition automatically creates an economic burden on the part of the authorities to curb those negative
effects. These effects impinge on the development planning system through the national budget, and the organization of a coordinated and integrated response towards HIV and AIDS.

A number of key issues emerged during the consultations with respect to the HIV epidemic in Malawi, including the following policy level issues; availability of drugs; availability and quality of staff; and stigma and discrimination.

2.9.1 Policy Issues

Funding and Availability of Drugs: a major concern raised by both network organisations and PLHIV is that of funding for HIV and AIDS programmes, and the availability of drugs. One PLHIV in Mulanje complained that:

“Essential drugs such as ARVs and bactrim are in very short supply even at the District Headquarters. Patients have to sometimes travel to other districts to get such drugs”.

The largest source of funding for the national response to AIDS in Malawi is through multilateral aid and special funds like the Global Fund against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). However, Malawi like many sub-Saharan African countries faces a number of challenges with accountability for donor funding for HIV programming. This coupled with the fact that a number of the external sources for funding are facing resource constraints while national budgetary allocations are very negligible, makes funding for HIV and AIDS programmes very unsustainable. Respondents felt that this calls for the need to effectively lobby the government and parliamentarians to ensure that the national budget in support of HIV programming is adequately provided for. In addition, while significant progress has been registered especially in controlling prevalence and provision of anti-retroviral treatment (ART), a better cohesive approach is required to tackle behavioural change among infected and non-infected people.

MIAA notes that in a situation where a cure is found, affordability for poorer nations such as Malawi would be an issue, as well as the moral obligation for individuals who will portray degraded behaviour due to the availability of a cure would continue to affect many people through new infections that may be difficult to cure, and the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases. MIAA also emphasized the need to provide for better education services that would enlighten, particularly women, on preventive actions such as strengthened communication mechanisms so people are continually being made aware of the effects of HIV and AIDS and better support to faith leaders/institutions working in the rural areas requiring resources to implement community support programs.

Another issue that was raised was that of coordination. There were serious concerns regarding the lack of integration of HIV and TB programs due to the fact that over 60% of TB patients are HIV
positive. Respondents called for the integration of HIV, AIDS and TB treatment into one and the general empowerment of PLHIV in order to build their self-esteem and enable them to challenge HIV and socio economic issues and build a health seeking culture. At the same time, they emphasized the need of integrated and comprehensive Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), including family planning, and HIV and AIDS, especially at a time when funds to HIV and AIDS programmes are dwindling.

Other problems highlighted related to the provision of more dignified services in rural health centres to help curb congestion while improving participation of people in getting tested and receiving HCT services.

2.9.2 Availability and Quality of Staff and Proper Support Services

As is the case with the whole Malawi health service, provision of HIV services is severely hampered by lack of adequate and well qualified staff. PLHIV have frequent emergency requirements and the lack of adequate staff and support services such as nutrition supplements, clean water and sanitation, can lead to life threatening situations.

“People living with HIV and AIDS should have access to good nutrition so as to enhance the action of anti-retro viral medication. It is almost impossible for one to live a long life if nutrition is poor”.

A support group in Machinga requested that:

“There should be more VCT centres established in many areas. The distance to a VCT centre is rather very long in some areas and this makes it difficult for people to access such services. Government should therefore consider establishing more of these centres.”

At the same time, support groups demanded that:

“Support groups need to have access to credit and loans to start businesses to sustain group activities as well as to start individual businesses that will support their families.”

2.9.3 Stigma and Discrimination

It was also felt that stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV and AIDS is a problem that needs to be addressed for effective HIV programmes and services. Respondents expressed the need for an enabling environment where PLHIV would not experience stigma and discrimination through improved access to HIV and AIDS services (adequate infrastructure, personnel and drugs); availability of quality treatment for PLHIV (quality time with health personnel, privacy, regular health tests including CD4 count) and continuous monitoring of drug resistance and side effects so as to ensure timely switch/replacement of drugs associated with side effects. Most PLHIV said that they faced instances of discrimination, including at the work place and in education institution and that they were often not included in development activities.
“People with HIV and AIDS should be given equal opportunities to getting employed just like everybody else. There should be no segregation or discrimination from employers based on one’s HIV status”.

A concern for PLHIV that needs attention in the “future they want” is their individual empowerment to alleviate themselves from poverty. This will enhance their nutritional requirements, self-esteem and dignity, as well as allow them to claim their rights as right-bearers.

“Involving people living with HIV and AIDS in public works programmes so that they have money to buy food to diversify their diets”.

2.10 Capacity Development

Respondent’s emphasised the need to build capacities in all sectors. This called for a holistic approach to capacity development, embracing human resource development, institutional development as well as addressing policies that promote a conducive environment for people and institutions to function effectively.

2.10.1 Improvement of Quality of Public Services

Respondents pointed out that the quality of public service delivery has been disappointing in Malawi due to lack of proper planning at the central government level. Major sectors continue to suffer from inadequate resource allocations in terms of the right human resource, working equipment, and financial resources that can ably translate into tangible development for the country. Major observations are in the need for the installation of a better road network with tarmac roads for easy access to remote areas, including a properly functioning maintenance mechanism. Health services have been a major concern both at administrative and political realms. The health delivery system has been hampered by an inadequate supply of drugs, a short supply of well-trained medical personnel and limited utilities such as electricity and piped water.

Although there is naturally a high pressure on resources in service delivery, the organisation of these services remains an issue for the Government to resolve. For example, austerity measures that were put in place during the 2012/2013 national budget have led to reduction of budgets to services across the board, including health services in the districts where the demand has not changed. This only implies that people are not able to access free public services in all hospitals and health centres.

2.10.2 Improved NGO/CSO Working Environment

NGOs and CSOs note that the working environment in which they perform their functions is characterised with negative repercussions by ruling governments, which effectively restrict the freedoms for NGOs to disseminate advocacy messages. These organisations are hopeful for a future Malawi where space is provided to enable positive and comprehensive public policy debate, and that the populace is involved in expressing themselves for inclusive and empowered contributions to national development issues. It has been put forward by organizations represented by CONGOMA
that one way of enhancing such freedoms for CSOs and NGOs in Malawi would be to involve government in financing NGO/CSO activity, which will visibly empower organisations in engaging people in the national development agenda championed by the government system itself.

2.10.3 Improvement in NGO/CSO Internal Organization

The achievement of a better Malawi, for NGOs and CSOs operating actively in Malawi, does not only rest with the political and public responsibility to providing an enabling environment for effective participation in development. CONGOMA notes also that internal NGO organisation systems were rather inefficient, and advocated for improvements to promote the delivery of appropriate and most-needed advocacy messages. There is a need to have better capacity of NGOs in recruiting well qualified and experienced staff while also ensuring an efficient coordination mechanism for attainment of a rational implementation of CSO/NGO programs. Good coordination of NGO activity is important for making an impact on the constituents they represent, so that the four hundred (400) active organizations will no longer compete for target beneficiaries with similar concurrent interventions. This is key in facilitating the targeting of more people in implementation of programs in the various geographical locations according to their needs.

2.11 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Various women and children were consulted at district level both as individuals and groups. A national consultation on women and girls was also conducted, bringing together over 40 participants from various sectors including minority groups. From these consultations, emerging issues were related to women and girl’s empowerment and protection of rights from abuse and injustice.

2.11.1 Gender Equality

Gender equality remains one of the eight MDGs that may not be met by Malawi, by 2015. Although efforts have been made in Malawi through the institution of a Central Government line ministry that specifically expends its efforts to influence the equality of men and women in decision-making, and to empower women to aspire for better lives so that they are self-sufficient and can project a voice that is heard, such efforts lack adequate funding and political commitment. NGOs and CSOs want to primarily see a government that is more committed to the achievement of gender equality through better financing of the line ministry responsible. A financially-capable ministry will have better lobbying of the legislature so that conditions for women and girls in Malawi are improved for them to better contribute but also benefit from their effort. However, the NGOGCN observes that:

“Women need not be established in decision-making positions for the sake of meeting the 50-50 target, but that they need to be effective and empowered to hold such positions”.

The second most critical issue for the attainment of gender equality is the enforcement of policies and laws that protect women and girls from harassment of different kinds so that they are also free participants in socio-economic activities in their communities, including obtaining a decent education.
2.11.2 Women’s Empowerment

Respondents felt that there is a need to empower women to get involved in various economic empowerment activities such as agriculture and entrepreneurship. This will translate to reduced poverty at household level in a country that has a higher population of women than men. Although most women are already involved in small economic activities, they fail to venture into bigger enterprises due to lack of capacity in terms of knowledge and skills.

Image 5: Dalitso Community Savings and Investment Promotion

A number of women’s groups pointed out that apart from developing skills and knowledge; women need business facilities that are well-tailored and favourable to women. Such facilities include financing services, markets, business information centres and support to participate in international trade to help them start new businesses or grow existing ones. It was also pointed out that corruption has been one of the major hindrances to business growth. Therefore efforts to combat corruption need to be strengthened and increased.

CSO representatives expressed the view that a large portion of the population of women, particularly in rural areas, is involved in subsistence agriculture. Therefore, efforts to grow the agricultural industry in the country will directly and positively affect women. Excluding women in agriculture development efforts would be detrimental to their empowerment. Deliberate interventions to empower women in agriculture should therefore be introduced and promoted in order to enhance income generation as well as food security at household and national level.

In addition, the high cost of education was also said to be another hindering factor of women’s empowerment. Due to inadequate resources in families, the majority of girls are unable to attend tertiary education at the expense of educating the male child. As such, the country needs policies that promote the education of girls up to tertiary level to reap the benefits of an increased population of educated and empowered women in 10 or more years to come. And, apart from empowering women by building capacity, checks and measures have to be in place, both in government and the private sector, to ensure the existence of an environment that promotes
gender equality. This will help the realization of the nation’s dream of having more women in decision making positions. Segregation of women and girls, especially those living with HIV and AIDS or pregnant, from social activities and developmental support such as FISP should be eliminated.

**Protection from Women, Girls and Child Abuse:** Issues of gender mainstreaming have been a challenge for the focal Ministry. There has been a general outcry throughout the consultation process against the abuse of women, girls and children. Gender based violence is a huge impediment to the enjoyment of human rights, especially sexual and reproductive health rights, by women in the country as it makes them more vulnerable to HIV infection and poverty and also results in girls dropping out of school due to teenage pregnancies. A call for protection against such abuse is one of the key issues that emerged. Cases of incest and rape seem to be on the rise while efforts to combat such abuse are not bold enough. There are more cases of demand for sex from women and girls by men as a means of bribing to get employment or services. Minority groups such as sex workers are continuously abused sexually but are voiceless to fight for justice because of their perceived position in society. Even domestically, women are denied their right to have a voice in matters concerning sex due to cultural perceptions.

Early marriages and child labour are still issues that need to be diligently addressed. There have been notable efforts to combat child labour in industries including agriculture but not at a domestic level. Many children carry out various domestic activities at the expense of education and other rights.

The country needs intensive sensitisation programmes to bring awareness of, and value in, the rights of women, girls and children. Structures and legal instruments that were designed to enforce such rights and protect any infringement should be reviewed and strengthened to improve the current unfavourable situation. Women and girls proposed that people convicted of sexual abuse and rape should be given stiffer penalties.

**Healthy Service Delivery:** Respondents indicated that there is need to improve access to maternal health services for pregnant women by opening more maternity centres, constructing maternity waiting homes and increasing the availability of ambulance services. More clinics and health centres should be upgraded to include maternal services. Young girls indicated that they were unable to access reproductive health services such as contraceptives because of the attitude of health workers. On the other hand, women living with HIV rely on government subsidy of drugs and therefore constant supply of ARVs and other drugs is essential.

“A Form four girl shared that girls who are on ARVs are discriminated against in boarding schools. As soon as it is known that they are taking these drugs, other girls begin to shun them. Schools need to come up with plans to protect those who are HIV positive and taking ARVs in schools.

“We want a future in which women who are HIV positive are not discriminated against. In our community we are sometimes told that there is no need for us to receive the subsidy...”
because we are too sick to farm and we will soon die anyway so why should they ‘waste’ the subsidy on us? This is not only unfortunate but unacceptable; we should be treated equally, if anything we need the subsidy more than those who are well and able to fend for themselves because of our need for a good diet because of the ARVs we take”.

Unfavourable cultural practices and traditions: Some cultural elements build perceptions in society that undermine women. Women grow up lacking self-esteem and therefore lack the zeal to get involved in high-level development responsibilities. Some practices such as extended periods of breaks from sexual activities for pregnant women promote the spread of HIV and other STIs as most men engage alternative sexual partners. The participants felt that negative attitudes, cultural practices and beliefs were bottlenecks to development because they emphasised the role of men at the expense of women and girls. As such, cultural beliefs that promoted gender imbalance should be discouraged through advocacy.

Girl child development support programmes: A number of girls interviewed during the children and youth consultations indicated that there should be programmes put in place and promoted that help develop girls mentally and physically. Girls should be aware and knowledgeable about anatomy developments. Girls should be stimulated to dream and supported to pursue their dreams.

“We want a future in which girls as well as boys will have access to quality education from primary to college/university level”. In the tea growing areas for example, the girls are encouraged to continue with their education and a good number have completed Form IV but fail to go to college/university because their parents cannot afford to pay school fees. These girls end up getting married or looking for work in the estates. In order to get a job, the girls are usually asked to sell their bodies to the bosses and this defeats the purpose of being educated. We want education to be free for everyone from primary to college/university”.

Employment and entrepreneurship: Youth organisations representatives were of the view that an investment culture among Malawians needs to be cultivated to reduce unemployment and increase job creation. Informal trade, which is booming, could be a reliable source of public funds through appropriate taxation. At the same time, fiscal policies should be flexible to encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), as current fiscal policies are prohibitive. Similarly, bank lending rates were too high (currently at 35%-40%). At the same time, the policy that prohibits withdrawing foreign currency from Foreign Currency Denominated Accounts (FCDA) does not help in attracting investment funds from Malawians in Diaspora. All these issues need to be addressed.

A number of youths observed that the sharing of ideas and skills among youth in entrepreneurship and investment should be facilitated and encouraged through the creation of youth links within the country and the African sub-region. It was also observed that current FDIs do not assist in developing Malawi as the majority of them are in the retail business with profits being siphoned out of the country.
“Title deeds should not be made only in men’s names but should include in both men’s and women’s in order to minimize cases of property grabbing. Widows are not protected without a title deed when their husbands die. I depend on farming for my livelihood and when my husband died a wrangle ensued with my husband’s relatives over the land where we were farming and they literally grabbed our property from me and I was left to fend for my children without help from the deceased’s relatives. We were discriminated in many ways. We want a future in which widows and orphans are protected”

2.12 Population Dynamics and Development

The trends in population growth, confirmed in the 2008 Population and Housing Census, indicates that development gains, whether economic growth, food security or achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), will remain fragile and will not meet required levels due to the increased pressure of a growing population with a limited resource base. Given the current expenditure requirements for providing health and education services and the level of revenues collected by Government, any population increases are going to increase the strain on services and negatively impact the quality of those services.

Malawi’s population has grown three times since independence. During the consultations, issues of rapid population growth and its effects on land and environmental degradation were recurrent. Community leaders highlighted the reduction in land holding sizes, sighted the continued land disputes they have to settle as a demonstration on how population growth is putting pressures on land. The impact of population growth on issues of environmental management and economic activities is linked. Even if the services and manufacturing sectors were to grow, they noted that fast population growth would mean that the absolute numbers of those remaining in the agriculture sector would not decline. This implies that the absolute pressure on the land and other natural resources will remain. In the absence of some additional major leap in agricultural productivity and value addition, the reliance on subsistence rain-fed agriculture for incomes, on declining sizes of farm plots, implies that Agriculture does not offer any further quick wins for poverty reduction beyond the gains achieved through the Agricultural Input Subsidization Programme in recent years.

Consultations with stakeholders indicated the need for increased access to family planning services country wide to stem population growth. However, most policy frameworks, national development
programmes, as well as district development plans don’t reflect population challenges such as rapid population growth, inadequate reproductive health services, and gender disparities in socio-economic service access.

It was noted that currently, widows and single women do not receive any kind of targeted support to help maintain their families, which has a negative effect on women in Malawi as the population of widows has increased due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The increase in HIV/AIDS deaths is posing an additional challenge since widows living with HIV/AIDS require better diets and medical services that are usually not available.

Similar challenges were highlighted with regard to social services, which continue to be inadequate due to population increases. In a country where over 60% of the population reside in rural and remote areas, the provision of better social services has never been required more in order to respond to the rising population (the highest in the world, with an estimation of doubling every 16 years).

Young people feel they are left out of consultations on development despite them being in the majority. The current demographic profile shows 40 percent of the population consists of young people, aged between 10 and 29 years (Population and Housing Census, 2008). The significant proportion of the youth in the population has long-lasting implications on the development of Malawi. This youthful population provides the country with a vast human resource potential, which, if properly nurtured and tapped can greatly contribute to national accelerated and sustained economic growth and development. The young people require adequate services in health and education and the development of livelihood skills. Respondents indicated that the national economy has not benefitted from this youth population due to a number of social, cultural, economic and political problems that hamper enhanced participation of the youth in the country’s economic activities. These problems include high illiteracy levels, limited access to quality secondary and tertiary education, limited access to technical, vocational and entrepreneurial skills education, high levels of unemployment and under-employment, lack of access to quality scientific and technological awareness, poverty, early childbearing and effects of the HIV pandemic.

Investments in the current generation of young people will certainly bear fruit as the population ages, in terms of improved productivity, reduced health costs and enhanced social capital. Conversely, a large unemployed youth group will have significant negative impacts on both the stability and sustainability of economic development.

The National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM), in reviewing this report, pointed out the following:

- Youth organisations need funding/grants from government, since they have grown from single location in a district, to several districts. Imagine having a youth organization like YONECO in each district, what would be the impact, not only to the youth, but to the entire community.

- There is a need to have better capacity of NGOs and Youth Organisations, (currently registered with National Youth Council are 140, with many others non registered) in recruiting appropriate staff and material capacity, while also ensuring that the coordination mechanism for attainment of a rational implementation of Youth
• Strengthen capacity of youth organizations so that they all rise to levels of YONECO, AYISE and many others by: i) Providing them grants to run programs in their communities, (a minimum of K$5 million for 1 youth organization for 1 year, supporting 1 in each district; ii) Proving them seed grants to build places they should operate in; and iii) Training them in project management, community development, resource mobilization etc, so that eventually they can stand on their own and source funds from outside the country just like YONECO, AYISE, Nkhotakota Youth Organisation.

When the capacity of youth organization is built, government could sub contract some of the services to the youth organization, services like community mobilization, and communications.

Respondents also noted that rapid population growth is also being compounded by the rapid urbanization which has contributed to urban poverty putting a strain on the environment. Respondents implored the government to intensify implementation of policies aimed at curbing rural-urban migration.

Respondents noted that population trends can be influenced through human-rights based policies, and this requires ensuring universal access to reproductive health care and family planning, investment in education, and the empowerment of women and youth. Together, these measures not only improve the quality of life of populations by reducing infant, child and maternal mortality and arresting the spread of communicable diseases; they lead to higher levels of economic growth and poverty reduction by helping to meet unmet needs of family planning and empowering women, reducing fertility and slowing population growth. At the same time, family planning creates conditions for the best balance between population growth and sustainable natural resource use.

From the discussions, there was a general observation that sustainable development cannot be separated from population dynamics (changes in size, geographic distribution and age structures).
3. “THE MALAWI WE WANT”: SPECIAL AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

3.1 Widows and Single Mothers

Culturally Malawian women are not bread earners in families and as a result, the absence of husbands leaves families with huge shortfalls in provisions and labour for generating domestic income. This has created a demand of interventions to empower women in income generating activities such as entrepreneurship and agriculture to help them sustain families if circumstances resulting in absence of the husbands befall.

In recent years, the country has seen an increase in the number of widows mainly due to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. Such widows become victims of stigma in societies making it even harder for them to use systems and facilities for sustenance of families. An effective and sustainable effort to fight against segregation and stigma towards people living with HIV infection will help promote efforts of widows in their daily struggle to maintain families.

Unfavourable and weak legal systems and instruments have failed to fight against property grabbing for widows. Legal proceedings and requirements are usually too costly for widows with low (or no) incomes and do not promote joint ownership of property between husbands and wives. As a result, many widows are still losing property to relatives. On the other hand, weaknesses in legal systems and instruments have allowed many men to abandon women who have their children without provision of any form of support and hence an increase in number of single women.

Interventions are required to review the laws to protect widows and single women and putting in place instruments that ensure enforcement of such laws. Various policies and efforts by the government and non-governmental organisations to improve the welfare of widows and single women need unification to increase efficiency and the chances of success.

Although less than 1% of women during the consultations were widows, some key issues arise on the welfare of widows and divorced women in Malawi. In this regard, aspirations for a better Malawi are in place to see development that encompasses widows and divorced women among the many other interventions that affect women in general.

Malawian widows and single women currently face many challenges that need to be addressed for a successful post-2015 Malawi. Some of the many challenges that these categories of women face in Malawi are highlighted in Chart 4.
In spite of such challenges, a developed Malawi is expected to provide better welfare for widows and single/divorced women. A future Malawi where widows and divorced women are encouraged to join farming clubs in order to share progressive farming skills and have much easier access to farm inputs is a primary focus of these groups. Their participation in income generating activities and projection of a voice in society improves their bargaining power in various forums so that they are able to achieve more than they could otherwise do. The organisation of working groups and clubs for divorced and widowed women will improve their well being and enable them to have a united voice on their rights and capabilities.

In particular, the respondents indicated the need for improved support for widows. More specifically, widows need protection from property grabbing practices, which have arisen out of cultural traditions as well as high poverty levels in the country. A way of achieving this objective is that, while the legal framework may be enabling, there is need for better awareness for married couples that they can jointly own family property as land. Women identify this as a way of giving widows or divorced women an opportunity to project their concerns over ownership of property so they can take care of their children in a widowed or post-divorce situation.

Widows and single women also aspire for a Malawi that provides for better participation in economic activities that will enable the access to resources that support wellbeing. A relatively young widow at Uliwa in T.A. Wasambo area of Karonga District stressed the potential in livestock farming for income generation, although the lack of skills to expertly manage the enterprise needs to
be tackled. Through entrepreneurship, respondents emphasised the need to ensure that the Malawi they want is one where access to financial services is improved through provision of business loans to these categories of women; and the empowerment of women through skills development to cultivate experience in managing themselves in the circumstance that their marital status changes.

Respondents shared their desire to have a Malawi where associations for widows are put in place as effective tools for reaching out to, and supporting, widows.

Other aspirations that widows shared were the need for regulation of prices in markets for basic commodities so that the general public is not affected seriously, owing to the recent inflation and floatation of the exchange rate that has drastically affected families with a single income-earner. The need for enhanced care of orphaned children, road construction with bridges and culverts in rural areas, the construction of more schools and capacity building initiatives that support the establishment of businesses for widows and divorced women were also highlighted.

3.2 Children

The consultations identified four broad categories of disadvantaged children. These included

i. Children who have become household heads due to death of parents or guardians, or where parents/guardians who have migrated elsewhere, leaving them to fend for themselves;

ii. Children who have been orphaned and are under the care of new guardians;

iii. Children who have faced challenging experiences even under their parents’ care; and

iv. Street Children.

However, it should be noted that there are inter-linkages among these groups.

A total of 2,143 children of different backgrounds were consulted at both the district and national levels. Nearly 50% of them were girls.

Problems faced by these children range from poverty to physical abuses that are perpetrated by older men in the homes. The tolerance of society on men who sexually abuse girls has been noted as one major hindrance to correcting the problem of orphans and disadvantaged children across Malawi, while societal negligence on children that lack proper material and mental care was another. A group of community child development advisers at T.A. Mabuka’s Headquarters in Mulanje District observe that one of the most important contributions that the government and communities may accord children, including orphans and disadvantaged children, is the provision of a good education. As
such, the economy needs to ensure that there should be elimination of failure to attend school due to factors such as school fees. This intervention will assist in the realisation of a skilled generation who will be able to support themselves in the longer term.

Orphaned and disadvantaged children specifically highlighted the following as their aspirations for a future Malawi they want to see:

**Improved Agriculture and Food Security:** The attainment of a food secure nation is beneficial for all people, including vulnerable groups. Thus, food availability was singled out not only as a means to access nutrition that is necessary for sustaining life, but also accords dignity to people in need. Orphaned children want to have a Malawi where agricultural subsidies will have been designed to reach more people than the targeted inputs program that currently is being implemented. Beyond the provision of these inputs, they emphasized the need to also subsidize farm equipment that will be instrumental in farm efficiency during rainy growing seasons and during non-rain irrigation seasons.

**Improvement in Quality of and Access to Education:** The children under this category of people in Malawi also share the common view that the quality of all forms of education in Malawi needs to be improved beyond 2015. They want to have an education system where learning resources are well targeted and that there need for adequate learning materials in schools, including good infrastructure and learning equipment, as well as the recruitment of adequate and qualified teachers, are met. In relation to the absence of appropriate facilities for children who are physically challenged, learners in a focus group discussion at Bango primary school in TA Mabuka in Mulanje district said:

> “Some of our friends who are physically challenged in terms of hearing and sight do not attend school. Even if they try to come to school, there are no facilities and staff who can help them”

They urged the need to address the gap for special needs education (school infrastructure for inclusive education, teachers and learning materials).¹³ Children who are heading households at Iponga in Karonga District additionally envisaged an education system beyond 2015 that will cater for children in their situation to be able to go to evening schools so they can concentrate on taking care of their siblings and children during the day.

**Good Home Environment:** A good home was also mentioned as a priority need for the three age groups to live a normal life. For the age group 6-11, both boys and girls cited a good home as a priority need in terms of provision of good shelter with electricity, parental care, parental guidance and counselling, as well as the enjoyment of the right to play, the right to choose things, parents having a non-discriminatory attitude to OVC, friendly parents, a prayerful family, provision of decent

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¹³ UNICEF p5
clothing and proper sanitation facilities such as toilets and washrooms. Specifically, girls cited the need for good toilet facilities in the home as a vital element to live a normal life.

The children were particularly concerned that such kind of homes are not available to children from poor families, children from divorced parents, children with step parents, children from families whose parents have migrated to South Africa to work, children whose mothers are in the sex industry, children whose parents are alcoholics, children with parents in polygamy, children whose parents are illiterate and children who engage in child labour.

In relation to child labour, learners in a focus group discussion at Mzokoto primary school in TA Mwankhinikira in Rumphi district said:

“Parents should not absent us from classes at school in order to use us to take care of our siblings at home”

In relation to parental discipline, learners in a focus group discussion at Hoho primary school in TA Mabilabo in Mzimba district said:

“Parents should avoid beating us when we do something wrong. It is better for them to discipline using other ways that are less traumatic”

Good Road Infrastructure: The construction of roads, bridges and culverts will be important in facilitating travel to schools in rural areas of Malawi. Orphans at Hope House 1 in Dowa District further linked the advantages of good road infrastructure to markets and transport development.

Increased Small and Medium enterprises: The encouragement of a policy of small and medium enterprises will be critical in ensuring self-reliance for vulnerable people including women and youth. Respondents said successful businesses will also enable them to employ others, a means to reduce the problem of high unemployment among young women and men. They also said that good infrastructure for markets and market sanitation was needed so as to ease the facilitation of business transactions.

Improvement in Health Services: Access to quality health services remains a challenge for many vulnerable children. Although Malawi is the only country in the SADC region with universal access to health services, orphans and disadvantaged children observe that the unavailability of drugs in hospitals needs to improve beyond 2015, for them to lead a better life. Proper infrastructure for health centres and hospitals need to be established and be supported by qualified and adequate health care staff especially in rural areas. In this vein, the respondents at T.A. Kampingo Sibande in Eswazini, Mzimba District, emphasised that they would like to have a Malawi where rural health personnel were properly housed as an incentive to their working in remote areas. Young people emphasized importance of provision of health services adequate for their needs.
Social Support Services: It was noted by the respondents that there are some disadvantaged children and orphans who have no access to any income, capital or assets. As such, they would like to see improved targeted support for such children through social support services that directly assist with their daily livelihoods such as school fees and learning materials, housing, clothing and food.

Legal Support and Civic Education Services: For orphans and disadvantaged children living under the care of guardians, the majority of issues arose from girls, and relate to the issue of sexual abuse by men. These girls highlight the cultural beliefs that bind them from speaking out when they are abused as it is mostly deemed a symbol of respect. Based on this, most girls take a long time to reveal abuses to authorities. A girl from T.A. Njewa in Lilongwe District shared the sexual abuse she experienced with an uncle who was being taken care of by her parents. Due to the constraints of the house, she was forced to share a bedroom with her uncle. The uncle raped her for years before she could reveal the abuse, as she felt, aside from the fear of social ridicule in her community, that her parents and relatives would not believe her. As an addition, another sexually abused girl in Lilongwe indicated that it becomes advantageous for girls not to report these cases to avoid problems that young men may not want to marry them in future. The aspiration for such girls is that they want to see a Malawi where a legal support mechanism is in place to protect girls when they report sexual abuse cases. Lastly, sexually abused girls envisage a post-2015 Malawi where more civic education is provided in rural communities on how to handle sexual abuse cases.

Image 8: Child Household Heads in Karonga District
3.3 People with Disabilities (PWD)

The national consultations both at the district and national levels highlight some fundamental aspirations that PWD have about the Malawi they want to see in the period beyond 2015. A cohesive package of aspirations from the Federation of People with Disability emphasizes 11 development areas that are key to improve participation of PWD in development, as well as their enjoyment of liberal rights to the development that will have been attained.

**Education:** People with disabilities aspire for a Malawi that will have an education system and structures that promote delivery and access of inclusive education for all. It remains difficult for pupils with disabilities to attend school as they need assistive devices, specialist teachers, a proper curriculum that addresses their needs, good disability-friendly infrastructure, and means to communicate effectively with certain forms of disability as sign language and Braille. There is a need for Malawi, after the year 2015, to genuinely implement Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which stresses the need for the Malawi government to ensure equal access to an “inclusive education system at all levels” and to provide reasonable accommodation and individual support services to PWD to facilitate their education. PWD want a Malawi where the “Education for All” movement will genuinely and widely benefit all children, youth, women and men with disabilities in accessing gender sensitive quality education in the realization of an inclusive education system for an inclusive Malawian society. This is education that is responsive to the rights of PWD, and enhances equity in education provision at all levels.

**Health:** There is a need to make health service delivery in Malawi, and information accessible to all PWD using the human rights based approach in areas such as infrastructure, assistive devices, specialist health workers, and sign language. A post-2015 Malawi should have quality, appropriate, accessible, affordable and available health care services to all persons with disabilities, a fulfilment of their rights (accordingly with Article 25 of the UNCRPD). In addition, there is a need to ensure that health facilities are equipped better for provision of appropriate rehabilitation services.

**Food Security and Nutrition:** As part of the national effort to having a food secure nation, PWD identify challenges that are due to their physical status in the production of or other forms of access to food and nutrition. PWD want full access to all essential services and participation of persons with disabilities in all livelihood initiatives that take place in their communities. It is noted that good nutrition would help eliminate all forms of disabilities that are related to it, besides the need for food adequacy. As one of the primary needs in life, access to food becomes the first step to achieving an equitable and just social security system for all. It is envisaged that proper advocacy programs are designed to demonstrate the links between malnutrition and disability through working with people with disabilities.
**Growth and Employment:** In the period beyond 2015, PWD would like to see a Malawi where economic empowerment of PWD will no longer be viewed as a social protection issue but a cross-cutting development issue receiving deserved attention from all sectors of the economy. A gentleman in Chikhwawa who was consulted in the district level consultations notes that, within themselves, PWD need to be encouraged that “they can” instead of societal belief that they should be dependent on others. Malawi should be an economy where development should not only be viewed in terms of economic growth and per capita income (or based on economic indicators), but also the full development of PWD in their communities. To engage PWD in productive activity, there is need to establish disability tailored labour and employment policies and laws that will cushion the PWD from market imperfections while making efforts for the realization of Article 27 of the UNCRPD:

> “Recognizing the right of PWD to work, on an equal basis with others including the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to PWD”.

As it applies to all people, access to decent work is a birth right, and as such, provision of equitable employment opportunities in both public and private sectors needs to be a guiding principle entrenched in all employers.

**Inequalities:** Equal opportunities and participation of PWD in all development and recreation structures and initiatives is an imperative in ensuring an inclusive development agenda. Therefore, there is need to promote a barrier-free Malawian society where inclusive policies, programmes and laws form the core of development processes. As was noted at Iponga in Karonga District, community based development committees do not include PWD, in spite of their willingness to contribute in their best ways to local development initiatives. Recognition of PWD and according them respect as equals in all matters of public life needs to be enforced as a matter of entitlement and not charity. PWD want to be given a chance to participate in dialogue and debate as part of the diverse nature of the Malawian society, as well as active participation in local development activities, to further advance equality, equity and dignity in Malawian societies. PWD should be given equal opportunity for employment. Usually, employers are unwilling to employ people with disabilities, claiming they have no work to offer and this is greatly discouraging for disabled people who are currently in schools. Government should therefore make it a point to formulate policies which stipulate the need to recognize PWD as people with full capabilities and not be sidelined but empowered.

**Water and Sanitation:** As water is life to all, access to potable water is a basic need for PWD. Water facilities that are within reach and provide for user-friendly mechanisms will further enhance the attainment of good sanitation and contribute to the prevention of disabilities being a restraint to accomplish many things. According to Article 28 of the UNCRPD, PWD want Quality, Accessible, Affordable and Appropriate water and sanitation facilities available for all.
**Environmental Sustainability:** There is need to include PWD in environmental decision making processes, so as to have their opinions heard on the environment they also share.

**Governance:** As a way of providing for an opportunity for the redress of matters affecting PWD, a future Malawi beyond 2015 needs to uphold self-representation in all matters affecting them. This will assist in ensuring access to justice for all people, where voices are heard because it is people’s “right to be heard”.

**Conflict, Violence and Disasters:** PWD in Malawi would like to see a post-2015 Malawi where they are protected during conflicts, violence and natural disasters. In prevention of such events, they would like to see the promotion of peace, whose absence may be cause for disability for many people. There is need to eliminate impunity for perpetrators of violations of rights of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, there is need to encourage self-representation of PWD at all levels, including assessment excises to ensure a rebuilding program is inclusive.

**Energy:** It is important to include persons with disabilities in energy policies and programmes, so that the requisite infrastructure caters for people with disabilities to encourage their participation and enjoyment of benefits of such development. As such, there is need for access to Quality, Affordable and Appropriate adaptive energy technologies for PWD.

### 3.4 Elderly People

As part of an important constituent of vulnerable groups, the elderly were consulted to get their views on the post-2015 Malawi that caters for their group. Apart from meeting them in groups and individual level interviews, the Elderly People’s Association was also instrumental in providing inputs from a more representative sample of, particularly, elderly citizens of Malawi. Based on the challenges that are being faced in their respective categories, they have pronounced needs that a better Malawi would address.

**Education:** although many elderly people stressed the need to improve the standards of education delivery, the elderly, however, focused more on a society that respects the role of education in adult literacy. Indeed, a more literate society would help dissemination of development messages for many people even in remote areas.

**Health:** A group of the elderly in T.A. Ngabu observes with emphasis the need for a post-2015 Malawi being one where health services and housing are made available to them.
**Water and Sanitation:** At T.A. Kanduku in Mwanza, a group of elderly persons stressed the need to improve access to potable water through sinking of more boreholes so as to lessen distances walked to access safe and healthy water.

**Culture:** elderly people felt a developed Malawi will be better with the promotion of its cultures that have identified its people for a long time. They feel that even religious leaders can be useful partners in cultural development in their role of enhancing morals among their people.

![Image 9: Elderly People from T.A. Kanduku, Mwanza](image)

**Support Structures:** In relation to this, they add that CBOs play a critical role in rural communities and hence the need to have a future Malawi where CBOs are strengthened to assist community participation in various development activities. Elderly people want interventions that help support the elderly to easily farm food crops for them to be less dependent on youthful relations who may not be able to afford growing food for them. So, mechanisms that sustain the availability of food throughout the year are necessary for their vulnerability to be reduced.

EPA pointed out that, social cash transfer should benefit all elderly because they are mostly unable to farm or work for food and other needs. Some of the elderly people are actually looking after orphaned and other disadvantaged children, therefore require a lot of support. Social cash transfer beneficiaries are chosen without the knowledge of the CBO who have records of both elderly and needy people in area and this compromises quality of the results. The programme suffers inclusion or exclusion error in choosing beneficiaries.
3.5 Parliamentarians

Parliamentarians consulted want a Malawi in which issues of agriculture, education, gender equality, health, energy and environment management are addressed as key priority areas in an enabling environment where governance and economic structures, human rights and patriotism are put in proper perspective.

3.6 E-Consultations

Respondents who made electronic submissions, mainly through face book and text messages want a future Malawi in which there are concerted efforts towards poverty eradication and increased youth engagement especially in regards to national development. While respondents advocate for better health care, including combating HIV and AIDS, and other diseases, improved maternal and child health, as well as health care infrastructure. They also call for accessible quality education from primary to tertiary education. Some respondents specifically want infrastructure development especially in health, education facilities, road network and tourism industry. In order for national development to take place, respondents recognise the need for an enabling environment with the following;

- Stable economy
- Good education system
- Appropriate and effective foreign investment
- Inclusiveness
- Better working conditions e.g. civil service
- Improved security i.e. Police reporting more efficiently to emergencies
- Good governance
- No corruption
- Involvement of private sector
- Accountability of resources
- Political tolerance
- Environmental preservation
- Improved Social and Security welfare
- Improving Human Development
- Better housing, food, education, health care and social welfare
- Invest in science and vast technology
- Agriculture
- Green belt
- Reduce donor dependence
- Address gender inequalities
- Electricity for all and no load-shedding
- Freedom of speech
3.7 Priority Areas and People’s Commitments

Table 1 presents selected commitments that the various typologies of respondents are prepared to make on identified priority areas based on the various thematic areas. The responses reflect the socio-economic status of the various respondents. For example, members of District Executive Committees, tend to indicate how they can influence Council decisions, through their respective responsibilities to get development outcomes that will lead towards the desired solutions. Traditional leaders, on their part indicate how they can use their authority to influence people to act in ways that will lead to specific desired solutions.

Table 1: Priority Areas and People’s Commitments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Areas</th>
<th>Recommended Priority Areas and Actions</th>
<th>Respondents’ Commitment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance and Accountability</td>
<td>The key action points were as follows:</td>
<td>Take part in driving the district council towards financial independence from government (Dir of Fin – Lilongwe DC)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Strengthening separation of powers and checks and balances between the three branches of government;</td>
<td>organizing themselves into clubs and groups in which development agendas can be discussed and undertaken (Chimono village men’s group – Lilongwe)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Promotion of transparent and merit-based criteria for recruitment, the removal and evaluation of</td>
<td>Sensitize communities of and encourage them to take responsibility of developmental policies and get involved in various economic activities. Community-centred development initiatives can contribute towards poverty eradication (TA Ngabu – Chikhwawa)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>personnel in the public service;</td>
<td>To encourage political members to be educated by nominating educated people into party positions (Politicians – Machinga)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Fighting high levels of corruption and lack of accountability;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Encouraging the spirit of national service and self-help;</td>
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<td>• Promoting a democratic culture within political parties and NGO/CSO;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Nurturing and choosing transformative leaders;</td>
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<td>• Implementing the decentralization policy, in line with the legislation;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Facilitating a legal framework for local governance and devolution from the centre to the local</td>
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<td></td>
<td>councils.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Development</td>
<td>• Improve the Roads Network;</td>
<td>Selling produce to buy equipment for the school borehole (Primary school students – Primary school students –)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Emphasize on improving feeder roads in rural areas to promote the development of</td>
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<td>National Consultations on Post MDGs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Agriculture, business and access to social services, such as health and education;</td>
<td>Lilongwe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Improve governance within the roads sub-sector, to ensure more vigilance in project implementation, and make companies more accountable to the citizenry in the provision of quality and timely services;</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Improve funding of the roads programme by increasing local financing and reduce dependence on foreign financing, particularly for repair and maintenance of roads; and</td>
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<td>o Establish rules and regulations that are enforceable to private sector firms in order to hold them accountable for the contracts they hold.</td>
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<td>• Improve Electricity Supply</td>
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<td>o Promote rural electrification;</td>
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<td>o Introduce sustainable sources of energy throughout the country by exploiting all possible sources of electricity, such as mini-hydro, solar, wind, geo-thermal, etc.;</td>
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<td>o The government should bring in the private sector to take part in electricity generation, either as sole operators or through public/private partnerships;</td>
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<td>o Tariffs should be reviewed to make them less prohibitive for private sector, while at the same time allowing for maintenance and repair of infrastructure as well as new investments to meet expanding demand; and</td>
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<td>o Introduce efficiencies in ESCOMs operations such as generation, transmission, distribution, and billing, by introducing appropriate reforms.</td>
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<td>• Expand access to ICT by reducing cost of services</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Improve supporting services and infrastructure (electricity, telecommunication networks etc,</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Introduce more internet service centres, especially in rural areas</td>
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<td>o Increase access to information</td>
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<td>o Children should be introduced to computers at a tender age</td>
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<td>o Remove/reduce taxation on ICT equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve water supply systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Construct more water facilities so that many people can have access to safe and clean water;</td>
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<td>o Build the capacity of local people on how to maintain the boreholes;</td>
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<td>o Erect water kiosks in urban areas that will help in supplying clean tap water to people within a short distance;</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Develop a monitoring system that will enable authorities to know the boreholes that are</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture Development and Food Security</td>
<td>Respondents proposed the following key actions:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Irrigation developments in lakeshore areas and other potential areas;</td>
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<td>• Provision of farm equipment for irrigation i.e. treadle pumps;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Make use of already existing dams to revive irrigation farming. For example, Ezondweni has two dams at Sambali and Katikwi which are currently not operational;</td>
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<td>• Agriculture: encourage diversification of crops;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Intensify irrigation agriculture through provision of equipment like treadle pumps in areas with water sources to promote winter cropping;</td>
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<td>• Value addition and processing of locally available produce and fruits i.e. processing of ground nuts to cooking oil, preserve mangoes into juice and jam;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Government needs to establish ways of making farm equipment accessible since they are very expensive for an average farmer in the rural areas. This can be done through loans, subsidizing equipment prices or by providing means to farmers to rent equipment at a fee;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide tractors to the Hara scheme for farmers to borrow for use in their farms;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Government can make available farm equipment such as tractors for farmers in the rural areas to hire at a fee;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Set up of telecommunication and IT services at Uliwa to improve access to information;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Train people in entrepreneurship before giving them loans;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Promote commercial farming by subsidizing farm equipment that can result into maximization of output;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Government needs to introduce factories in the area to process and add value to fruits and other farm products;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Farm equipment: provision of training of modern farming equipment and techniques to improve efficiency in their farming;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Intensify irrigation activities through use of motorized pumps, canals and sprinklers in areas which have water sources to ease the mechanical demands of treadle pumps, especially for people with special needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to and Quality of Education</td>
<td>Improvements suggested to improve the Education sector include a number of areas such as:</td>
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<td>• Increase the number of primary, secondary, and tertiary (technical/vocational schools and universities) institutions in order to provide sufficient places for all school going ages in Malawi stands highly on the priority requirements of the people in Malawi;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• GOM urged to continue offering free education and introduce compulsory schooling for all</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Moulding bricks to aid in construction of school blocks (Business people - Ntcheu)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establish a committee so that parents pay if they do not send their children to school (Community men – Lilongwe)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Encouraging our subjects to follow new farming methods (TA Njewa Council - Lilongwe)

Support the work of organizations that helps farmers with good farming practices to combat hunger (ADC – Chikhwawa)
primary school going children and to increase the number of tertiary level places by expanding existing institutions and building more public and private tertiary schools to cater for the growing school age population.

- Increase education infrastructure so as to ease the current congestion in education institutions, and at the same time make sure that proper infrastructure is constructed to enable learning even during adverse weather conditions;
- Upgrade of unqualified teachers and training of more teachers; provision of adequate and relevant teaching and learning materials and the provision of sufficient and quality amenities to meet the needs of girls in all public and private education institutions;
- Continuously review and revise syllabuses so as to provide trained and skilled manpower for the country’s evolving and changing manpower needs;
- Increase the funding to the education sector for adequate learning materials and equipment, including that required by people with learning disabilities;
- Universities and colleges should train people in technical skills and provide venture capital fund at the end of training so that students can start their own companies. Government should reopen training bases where people can acquire several skills hence be self-employed and employ others;
- Ministry of education should continue giving hardship allowances to rural primary school teachers in order to improve education quality in rural areas;
- In order to promote IT, computers should be introduced to primary schools so that the children can also keep up with the changing world;
- Promote access and protection of the right to education for all people including the vulnerable and minorities;
- Review the level of school fees in both private and public schools, to make them affordable, while at the same time expanding the bursary and scholarship programmes to meet the requirements of the needy;
- Expand the school child feeding programme to reach out to more schools, especially in the remote areas, and areas prone to food deficits, to encourage children to go to school; and
- Career development opportunities should also be provided to teachers for teacher’s self-improvement, as well as making aspiring teachers to join the profession.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Service Delivery</th>
<th>The key issues on improving healthcare delivery included the following:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of more health care delivery points close to where people live, by building more and rehabilitating existing health care infrastructures, like health centers, clinics and district hospitals, sanitary facilities, and staff houses, thereby reducing the long distances most people have to travel in order to access health services;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provision of educational facilities (Faith based organization leaders – Mulanje)

Advocate for volunteerism with the belief that while volunteering cannot replace effective education and training systems, it can increase the employability and holistic development of young people which produces the skills and capabilities relevant to the workplace, innovation, entrepreneurship and community leadership.

Delivering healthcare according to the needs of the country under proper medical ethics (District Hospital Executive – Machinga)

Encourage pregnant women to attend antenatal clinics (ADC – Ntcheu)
Increasing the numbers of health workers, including nurses and maternity staff, and improving their effectiveness, through better training and appropriate incentive packages, such as better salaries and timely payment to health workers, especially in rural areas;

Availability of drugs, medicines, and medical equipment at all health facilities, through adequate budgetary allocations, and improving the procurement system for medical necessities, to curb pilferage and corruption;

Catering for the requirements of people with special needs like the elderly, PLHIV, and People with Disabilities, and ensuring that health services were delivered in friendly environments for people living with special needs;

Incorporating reproductive health issues to ensure universal access to reproductive health services, and to sensitize families on the consequences of having very large families; importance of family planning as number one strategy to reducing maternal mortality.

Provision of reproductive health services to adolescents and women in hard to reach areas using rights based approach.

Improvement and placement of transport and communications equipment (vehicle, telephone, bicycle ambulances, etc.) at TA level to cater for health transport needs of remote rural areas;

Resume supplementary feeding programs in hospitals and health centers.

Provision of transport in each Traditional Authority to cater for emergencies requiring medical services offered by rural and district hospitals;

Adequate financing of health services in border districts for implementation of national identity cards which make it possible to offer free medical services only to bone fide Malawians while charging non Malawian citizens benefiting from our public health services;

an increased emphasis on preventive health than curative health services in view of limited resources;

Increasing the number of health surveillance assistants who can assist rural communities in the promotion of preventive health practices.

There should be more VCT centers established in many areas. The distance to a VCT center is rather very long in some areas and this makes it difficult for people to access such services. Government should therefore consider establishing more of these centers to not only promote positive ling but this would also create employment.

There should be maternity wards constructed at community level health centers. Currently, women have to travel long distances to access care during child birth. For some people, the distances are too long and they are unable to access professional care at all.

Increasing involvement of community traditional structures in health promotion and mobilization of women, adolescents, families and communities on timely access to essential health care package.
- Electricity, water supply and other equipment should be provided for in health centers. Due to the lack of electrical power, it is extremely difficult to carry out some vital services like blood transfusion and storage of heat sensitive drugs. Lack of piped water has also hampered service provision as hygiene is a critical issue at health centers.
- There should be accessible health facilities for all types of disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private Sector Development</th>
<th>For the private sector to play its rightful role, the following were suggested:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of Macroeconomic Stability,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conducive tax policy,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Investment in infrastructural development (Roads, power, water, sanitation).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improving economic governance by way of fighting corruption-to reduce cost of doing business;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improving predictability in laws, rules and regulations (need for even playing field);</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Promoting Private public partnerships, and reducing barriers to entry for new firms (Land, licensing, etc).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Government should focus on job creation by calling on investors to come to Malawi</td>
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<td>Factories and companies should be constructed by both the private sector and government in order to provide employment to people</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improvements to the mining sector can also provide many employment opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Companies and factories should be opened in local communities which will provide jobs to local communities hence increase their income levels.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide training in various skills to local people so to boost local industries and businesses.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Government should open local companies which can employ many youths and reduce the unemployment rate in the country.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open companies and factories in local communities so that jobs are available to young people.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improved markets</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In order to boost local businesses, lucrative markets should be available in remote areas where farming is done.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malawi has potential to be industrialized but the problem is with the government decisions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Malawi has several resources that can feed into big industries hence economic development.</td>
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<td>For instance, Malawi is rich in minerals that would help recover the economy if they were properly mined by the government itself and not leave it to foreigners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Government industrializing of the mining sector would be of higher benefit than just receiving revenue from foreign miners.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factories and companies should be introduced in remote areas so that people find jobs and hence develop the nation through taxes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They can organize themselves into groups to start up a village savings group. These groups have been known to improve livelihoods of participants (Ntaja women’s group – Machinga)
### Action Areas include:

- Incorporate issues of environment, natural resources management and climate change in the national development strategy.
- Systematically consider population trends and projections in our national, rural and urban development strategies and policies. Through forward-looking planning, which anticipates changes in population size, geographic distribution and age structures in order to address natural resource and climate change challenges linked to population dynamics.
- Harmonize the environmental and developmental policies in order to minimize the conflicts between the two.
- Stream-line environmental issues in other issues if they are to be given much attention.
- Enforce rules and regulations concerning environmental management.
- Equipping law enforcers with required materials and training.
- Promote awareness and sensitization of climate change issues among people on different levels from grass root to policy level.
- Encourage people to plant more trees to mitigate climate change.
- Disaster preparedness programmes should include tree planting role in the strategies to prevent flooding in low lying areas.
- Settlement in forest reserves and other protected areas should be strictly prohibited.
- People should be guided to settle in areas where access to domestic facilities such as water, sanitation and electricity are provided for.
- Encourage people to use technologies that use less firewood.
- Conduct institutional capacity assessment in order to identify gaps in knowledge and skills among institutions that deal with climate change issues.
- Link our climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to international measures such as carbon markets which help to cushion people from the effects and impacts of climate change.
- Government should focus more on mining uranium and also increase exploration of other minerals.
- Increase full involvement of stakeholders.
- Involvement of stakeholder at the inception stages and not after the projects have already been rolled out.
- Build capacity by providing for equipment and developing skills.
- Increase the ability of public and stakeholder involvement in mining issues through transparency by the executive arm of government.
- Improve management of the oil drilling project by carrying out a detailed environmental impact

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### Strengthening impact mitigation through environmental safety measures such as planting trees along rivers (District Environment officer – Machinga)

Provide hygiene education to communities through community empowerment. (DEC – Machinga)
**Science, Technology and Communications**  

To overcome some of ICT challenges, the following solutions were offered by the respondents:

- Invest in quality education for youth, continuous skills training for workers and managers, and ensure that knowledge is shared as widely as possible across society;
- Provide learning and teaching materials in most schools which hinder the advancement of science and technology in the country;
- Improve incentives for mathematics and science teachers;
- Employ and promote advanced technology by acquiring modern and advanced equipment that will get us desired developmental results;
- Offer Competitive incentives to attract and maintain competent human resource in the education, science and technology sector. This would also motivate employees to perform to their level best;
- Integration of NSTCP in overall development plans of government;
- Employ advanced learning and teaching methods in schools for the advancement of science and technology in the country

Employ and promote advanced technology by acquiring modern and advanced equipment that will get us desired developmental results (UN Staff)

Improved access to information on markets and prices for farmers and traders (ICT expert, Dowa)

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**HIV and AIDS**  

On funding of HIV and AIDS programmes and availability of drugs, a number of respondents indicated the following:

- The bulk of the funding requirements for HIV and AIDS have to do with treatment and caring of patients. In this respect, MIAA emphasized the need strengthen preventive measures, by providing better education services and information, especially for women and young girls, on preventive actions; strengthened communication mechanisms so people are continually being made aware of the effects of HIV and AIDS; and better support to faith leaders/institutions working in the rural areas, requiring resources to implement community support programs;
- Government should encourage and support HIV and AIDS support groups to campaign for voluntary counselling and testing (VCT);
- Hospital infrastructure should be improved for consultations. Lack of privacy discourages people who are not willing to disclose their status to go for VCT;
- Need for a cohesive approach to tackle behavioural change among effected and non-affected people;
- Engage in effective and sustainable fight against segregation and stigma towards people living with HIV and AIDS in general;
- Need for a regional/pooled approach to drug procurement which will lead to cost reductions;
- Allocation of more national resources towards HIV and AIDS programmes, including drug

Strengthen the HIV and AIDS prevention measures through campaigns in schools and communities (District AIDS Coordinator – Machinga)

Encourage the community to go for VCT (CBO – Dowa)

The volunteer actions of women and men in most communities has played a key role in advancing efforts to combat the HIV and AIDS pandemic through home-based care initiatives and peer to peer HIV and AIDS education and counselling – (PLHIV – Chikhwawa)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity Development</th>
<th>The following actions were proposed:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>• Promote the civil service charters;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Government must take very strong efforts of regulating the activities of NGOs in order for development to take place;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Avoid getting into agreements with donors that have terms and conditions which are prohibitive for the long-term development of the nation;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Accommodate only foreign relationships that are willing to support our plans rather than impose their agendas;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create a national drive to invest in appropriate technologies under a capacity building program;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- procurement, to reduce donor dependency;
- Improved accountability for use of donor funds on HIV and AIDS programmes.
- Government should give special attention to PLHIV, to support the shortfalls of reduced immune system;
- Government should adopt policies that focus on supporting PLHIV who are not yet sick, and not only supporting those needing extensive medical care.
- Medication of all needed types should be made available in hospitals for easy access to prevent people travelling long distances to access drugs and medication.
- Eliminating stigma and discrimination by fully involving PLHIV in all community and development activities. With proper counselling and medication in some cases PLHIV are healthy enough to work and get involved in development activities;
- There is need for more support for such people where the terms and conditions suit their specific needs
- Support through CBO is not the best way of reaching this target group because CBOs include people without HIV. The government should effectively run the current programme of making IDs for PLHIV that would help in identifying the target group;
- There should be policies in place that promotes organizations to employ PLHIV. Most volunteers living with HIV work for free for organization that are running funded programmes that can afford paying them for the services offered. Such volunteers could even reach out to more people if supported and empowered.
- The government to find ways to provide social support system for AIDS patients, including with food as some AIDS patients are, in some cases, unable to work due to many factors. In addition the government should provide funding for their HIV/AIDS families so their children can access education. The Government should also provide financial support to CSOS as they are unable to reach out to everyone in the provision of care and support programmes, among others.

Promote the civil servant service charters to where government official are accountable and transparent to the people they serve (Director of Administration – Lilongwe DC)

Education of traditional leaders so they understand their responsibilities (Ngana CCAP Reverend – Karonga)
### Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

- Empower women in income generating activities to help them sustain families in the absence of the husbands
- Institute favourable (accessible, affordable etc.) and strong legal systems and instruments to protect widows and single mothers
- Promote joint ownership of property between husbands and wives
- Put in place instruments that ensure enforcement of laws
- Unify various policies and efforts by the government and NGOs to improve the welfare of widows and single women in order to increase efficiency and chances of success
- Develop capacity in terms of knowledge and skills to venture into bigger economic activities
- Provision of business facilities that are well-tailored and favourable to women such as financing services, markets, business information centers and support to participate in international trade
- Strengthen and increase efforts to combat corruption
- Inclusion of women in agriculture development efforts through introduction and promotion of deliberate interventions to empower women in agriculture
- Institute policies that promote the education of girls even up to tertiary level to reap an increased population of educated and empowered women
- Place checks and measures in both government and private sector to ensure the existence of an environment that promotes gender equality and have more women in decision making positions
- Eliminate segregation of women and girls from social activities and developmental support especially those living with HIV and AIDS or pregnant
- Intensify sensitization programmes to bring awareness of and value in the rights of women, girls and children
- Review and empower more structures and legal instruments that were designed to enforce rights and protect any infringement
- Institute stiffer penalties for people convicted of sexual abuse and rape
- Put in place sustainable structures for managing the welfare of orphans, street children, etc.
- Efforts from various non-governmental organizations have to be centrally coordinated and monitored against pre-set standards to ensure that aid reaches the targeted orphans
- There should be programmes that help develop girls mentally and physically
- Advocating for the belief that women can also do things (National Consultation on Women)
- Encouraging education for women so that self-esteem is improved and women are capable (National Consultation on Women)

### Population Dynamics and The following actions were proposed by stakeholders:

- Rapid population growth is big challenge for Malawi and if no deliberate efforts are taken

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Malawi Post 2015 Development Agenda

National Consultations on Post MDGs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Intensify use of modern methods of family planning (FP) to address the rapid population growth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Traditional chiefs and structures should be used to advocate for the implementation of the National population policy to promote the small family concept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Male involvement in population issues should be intensified to address equality in decision making on population and family planning issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consider reviewing policies to go beyond information provision on family planning to schools and include access to Sexual and Reproductive health (SRH) especially FP by girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhancing the provision, access, delivery and utilization of sexual and reproductive health information and services to all including the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advocating girls’ education and delayed marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting the small family concept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Providing sexual and reproductive health education for both in-and out-of-school sexually active youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Addressing the vulnerabilities caused by population ageing, migration and rapid urbanization, and the interdependence of population and the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strengthening migration and national vital registration systems.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Enhancing the provision, access, delivery and utilization of sexual and reproductive health information and services to all types of development efforts (DC – Mulanje).

To check it, it will have disastrous effects on all types of development efforts (DC – Mulanje).
4. CONCLUSION

The consultation process undertaken at national and district levels included a variety of tools with focus on gathering the voices of the Malawian women and men, girls and boys through face to face key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Attention was given to ensuring that amongst others, individuals such as women, children, adolescents, youth, people with disabilities and people living with HIV and AIDS were targeted. Others consulted included members of the private sector, civil society organizations, Parliament and political parties. In addition to this rich consultative process around the country, review workshops were undertaken at each regional headquarters of Malawi’s three regions (North, Central and South).

In terms of the emerging issues, the following main areas emerged from the voices gathered around Malawi the following are recommended in the Post MDGs Development Agenda. These are:

1. Governance and Accountability
2. Infrastructure Development
3. Agricultural Development and Food Security
4. Access to and Quality of Education
5. Health Service Delivery
6. Private Sector Development
7. Environment, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change
8. Science, Technology and Communication
9. HIV and AIDS
10. Capacity Development
11. Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment
12. Population Dynamics and Development

Most of these areas directly reflect the priorities set in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy as well as the Economic Recovery Plan. Once finalized, it is hoped that GoM, together with its development partners such as the UN, will develop an Implementation Plan, with a clearly identified resource plan as well as a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. Annex IV provides a matrix depicting the thematic areas, emerging issues, strategies and implementable actions which we hope will assist with the plan formulation.

The theme of poverty reduction with focus around agriculture and food security comes strongly throughout the consultation, for all typologies of respondents. Limited access to inputs such as fertilizer is seen as a big limiting factor to agriculture, manifested by the inability of the poorest to access subsidized fertilizer. In this regard, the Government sponsored FISP was found to be out of reach of recipients, with many instances of corruption reported in its administration. Many respondents felt that improved irrigation and mechanization would likely trigger increased productive commercialization of agricultural products in Malawi. The importance of improved marketing and pricing arrangements, coupled with improved research and extension services, were emphasized as being critical to moving agriculture from its predominantly subsistence status to a business venture. In this respect, improvements in infrastructure, including road network, electricity
supply, science, technology and water and sanitation, were seen a “sin quo-non” for ushering development in the country.

Improvements in equality and equity amongst different groups and access to resources, especially in the provision of and access to quality education and health services, were seen not only as important for improving human welfare across all socio-economic groups, but were also seen as enablers for sustainable development.

Poor governance and accountability also featured very highly as a constraint to development, mostly because it curtailed people’s participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives. In particular, Malawi was perceived having a very weak local governance system and therefore affecting its capacity to be responsive to the issues on the ground. The absence of a representative local governance structure, couple with a weak and ineffective traditional leadership system (village headmen, chiefs, etc.) meant that people were not able to demand accountability from those governing with direct impact on their quality of life.

A very strong theme across the consultations, is the exclusion of women and other constituents like children and youths, PWD, PLHIV, and other vulnerable groups from accessing their rights being part of decision making process. Women for example, are excluded from many income generation activities, access to capital and loans, productive agriculture, decisions making while at the same time are affected disproportionately by food shortages and insecurity. Most respondents were not happy with the quality of delivery of public services, largely due to lack of capacity. Many public service workers lack the essential training and resources to deliver the services they are supposed to provide.

Respondents displayed not only the knowledge of what the problems were, but were also very clear in terms of the possible solutions to these, playing therefore a active and leading role in defining the “Malawi We Want”. Men and women, boys and girls offered numerous suggestions on how best the problems could be tackled, at the same time, there was a strong commitment with respect to the roles they must play in order to attain the desired results, indicating that Malawi as a nation has a strong wish and commitment improve its future opportunities.
ANNEXES

Annex I: List of Persons and Organisations Contacted

List of People, Groups and Institutions Consulted.zip

Annex II: Reports on Consultations Done by Others

Malawi Youth

Malawi Youth Consultations - UNAIDS.zip

Salima District

Salima District Consultation.zip

Young People

Young People Consultations - UNICEF.zip

UN Staff

UN Staff Townhall Consultations.zip

Annex III: Validation Workshops Report

Validation Workshops Consolidated Report.zip
Annex IV: Matrix of thematic areas, emerging issues, strategies and implementable actions

Matrix.zip

Annex V: References
