LEARNING STUDY ON DIPECHO PROGRAMMING IN MALAWI FUNDED BY DG-ECHO OVER THE PERIOD 2007 - 2014

Community Resilience in Focus

Chikwawa, Salima and Nsanje Districts

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This study has been developed as part of the IV DIPECHO project 'Bridging Disaster Risk Management with Resilience in Malawi Disaster Prone Districts' funded by DG-ECHO and implemented by Coopi, Goal, Christian Aid, and the Evangelical Association of Malawi.

Foreword

Weather-induced disasters continue to increase globally, often severely affecting development in the poorest countries and causing human and economic losses. This increase is mainly due to the effects of climate change which are causing the exacerbation of climatic, weather-linked and hydrological events. The impact of such phenomena is tightly interlinked with the vulnerability of the communities that are affected, whose ability to react is a key factor in applying a model for sustainable development.

Malawi is notably a disaster-prone country, facing a number of natural and human induced risk factors, including floods, drought, stormy rains, strong winds, landslides, deforestation, and environmental degradation. While relief aid is paramount to reduce the impact of disasters on the local population, equally important is to address the deep causes of disasters and to enable the local communities to be prepared to them. Thus, Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Mitigation are fundamental strategies to enhance resilience and reduce vulnerability.

Malawi has made remarkable progress in addressing such issues: on March 21st 2015, the National Disaster Risk Management Policy and Communication Strategy have been officially launched in the Country. However, the practical translation of those official instruments into the local level is often hard to achieve because of structural, financial and operational challenges. Since 2007, DIPECHO programmes have played a fundamental role in strengthening local DRM structures and in addressing gaps in the implementation of the national DRM framework. This study aims at introducing success strategies and best practices in order to foster replication and improvement, sustain stakeholders coordination, and give a contribution in the journey towards a resilient Malawi.

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COOPI Malawi Head of Mission

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Abbreviations

ACPC	Area Civil Protection Committee
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCAA	Climate Change Adaptation Agenda
CEPA	Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
DCPC	District Civil Protection Committee
DG-ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department
DIPECHO	ECHO's Disaster Preparedness Programme
DISCOVER	Developing Innovative Solutions with Communities to Overcome Vulnerability through Enhanced Resilience
DoDMA	The Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAM	Evangelical Association of Malawi
EC	European Commission
ECRP	Enhancing Community Resilience Programme
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GIS	Geo Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
GVH	Group Village Headman
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency Virus infection and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IIASA	International Institute for Applied System Analysis

ABBREVIATIONS

INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
MGDS II	The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VCPC	Village Civil Protection Committee
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

PURPOSE

This report provides the objectives, methodology, and key findings of the learning research commissioned by COOPI - Cooperazione Internazionale within the DG-ECHO funded project "Bridging Disaster Risk Management with Resilience in Malawi's Disaster Prone Districts". It is the IV DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) project in Malawi and is implemented by COOPI in consortium with GOAL Malawi, and Christian Aid Malawi as the consortium lead.

The learning research covers the current and the previous DIPECHO projects in Malawi over the period 2007 – 2014. The objective of the learning research is to draw *lessons learned* and *good practices* throughout the course of DIPECHO programming in Malawi, thereby providing solid ground for future DRR-related activities at the community level. It also addresses the *complementarity* with national level DRM efforts and with the efforts of other partners, when relevant. Appendix 1 explains what is defined as 'lessons learned' and 'good practices' within the scope of this research.

Based on the key findings, the report provides some *action-oriented recommendations* to be taken into consideration within DIPECHO IV project as well as in the longer-term to foster the evidence-based learning, ownership, and sustainability of the DRM activities in Malawi.

The rationale for this consultancy is to support the consortium partners to increase synergy of their activities within DIPECHO IV as well as to bridge DRR with the broader resilience agenda at the community, district, and national level. It is also expected that the findings of the study will be shared among a wide range of stakeholders for a better integration of DRM and poverty reduction interventions, ensuring thereby increased community resilience.

Towards this end, the findings of the learning research are conceptualized in the community-based DRR evidence and learning framework (Appendix 2). The design of the framework is informed by a number of conceptual frameworks further explained in the appendix.

INTRODUCTION

DEVELOP PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

To carry out the learning research COOPI hired an independent international consultant.[1] The research took place during October – November 2014 in Malawi.

The research is exploratory in its nature, focusing on a broad range of issues under DRM and CCA. It is a qualitative research conducted using a combination of methods including desk study of relevant documentation, direct observations, institutions visits, individual in-depth interviews, group interviews with multiple stakeholders, and brief case-studies. Also a series of community level group discussions were organized in the selected villages in the three districts included in the DIPECHO IV project: Chikwawa, Salima and Nsanje. The list of the people and institutions consulted is provided in Appendix 4. The chosen methods allow to address the expected diversity in the profiles of the selected informants and also to encourage respondents to extrapolate their views according to the varied nature of their relationships or involvement in DRM in Malawi.

To ensure an element of compatibility[2] and to strengthen the argument that the progress made within the three target districts can (with a certain degree of confidence) be attributed to the DIPECHO interventions, the study includes also Kasungu district where no DIPECHO interventions have taken place and no other partner have been engaged in DRM-related activities before September 2014.

A set of action-oriented recommendations is proposed with a two-fold perspective: a) to be considered during the implementation phase of DIPECHO IV project, and b) to be considered for the longer-term engagement in strengthening DRM in Malawi.

By the end of the mission in Malawi, the consultant invited the consortium stakeholders to a final round-table discussion to present the initial findings and clarify remaining issues. Unfortunately, only COOPI and Goal teams made themselves available for this meeting, while the other partners had other priorities to address. The meeting did not take place.

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

The analysis provided should be viewed in light of the following limitations. First, the request to draw lessons learned '…from previous DIPECHO actions implemented in Malawi….'[3] implies that the time horizon of the study goes beyond the life-span of DIPECHO IV. Even though all three districts and all GVHs (group village heads) covered by DIPECHO IV were also included in the previous DIPECHO projects, however, not all villages were equally engaged in the project implementation. Obviously, this would have an objective reason since not all villages might have had the same urgency for their engagement in DRR activities.

[1] ToR of the study, see Attachment 3

[2] From the methodology perspective is not necessary for the exploratory research, however, it was considered useful by the implementation team to visit the 'control' district.

[3] ToR of the study, see Attachment 3

INTRODUCTION

However, the sampling of the villages selected for this study is based on those villages that have been engaged in all previous DIPECHO projects and have achieved visible progress in promoting community-based disaster risk management.

Second, the consortium provided limited resources for the realization of the study, therefore, only short study-visits were organized in each target district, covering only one village per district. However, cross-validation allowed for some extrapolation of results, with a certain level of confidence.

Third, due to the recourse limitations it was not possible to "… analyse how DRR is integrated into other governmental and non-governmental programmes and how success made can support the full implementation of DRR policy once in effect" as well as to "... incorporate regional learning from South Africa preferably also supported by DIPECHO", as suggested in the terms of reference (ToR).[4] However, the research addresses the complementarity with Enhancing Community Resilience Programme (ECRP) and Developing Innovative Solutions with Communities to Overcome Vulnerability through Enhanced Resilience (DISCOVER), as these initiatives were prioritized in DIPECHO IV project. The research is also informed by the findings of the independent "Evaluation of DG ECHO's disaster preparedness and DRR actions in Southern Africa & Indian Ocean" commissioned by the EC in 2011.[5]

STRUCTURE

This paper consists of an introduction and two parts. The introduction outlines the purpose, methodology, and the constraints of the learning research. Section II provides the background overview of DIPECHO programming in Malawi, the country's developmental context, hazard profile, DRR policy and institutional framework. It also explains some basic limitations of the DRM sector at the local level and list the lessons learned accumulated within the DIPECHO programming so far. The Section II provides an overview of the good practices documented during the learning research. The paper is supported with six appendices to provide additional context and background information. Appendix 1 explains how the 'lessons learned' and 'good practices' are defined within the scope of this study. Appendix 2 presents the Community-Based DRR Evidence and Learning Framework. Appendix 3 presents the ToR for this study. Appendix 4 provides an overview of the organizations and experts consulted. Appendix 5 explains the National DRM Structure in Malawi.

[4] "Evaluation of DG ECHO's disaster preparedness and DRR actions in Southern Africa & Indian Ocean", November 2011

Background and Policy Context in Malawi

DIPECHO PROGRAMMING IN MALAWI

Increased community resilience to natural hazards has been the primary focus of all DIPECHO projects in Malawi to date. During the period 2007 – 2014, DG ECHO has funded four rounds of DIPECHO initiatives in Malawi, namely

a) DIPECHO I, 1st October 2008 - 31st March 2010, ***Supporting Targeted Vulnerable Communities to Build Upon their Capacities to Prepare, Respond and Mitigate the Impact of Floods in Salima District;*** with the focus to establish and capacitate 'civil protection committees' at the district, area, and community levels (DCPCs, ACPCs, and VCPCs respectively). DIPECHO I *was the only project* in that time to support the decision of the government to establish 'civil protection committees' at the local level to encourage communities' efforts towards DRM.

b) DIPECHO II, 1st June 2010 – 30th November 2011, ***Establishment of Sanitation Facilities at Evacuation Points for Flood Affected Populations in Salima District;*** with the focus exclusively on floods risk management. During this round of funding, the flood EWS was initiated and implemented in the target communities.

c) DIPECHO III, 1st July 2012 – 31st December 2013, ***Empowering Civil Protection Structures in Piloting the Use of Innovative Approaches for Disaster Risk Reduction Activities in Malawi;*** with the focus on building coordination between the DIPECHO partners and the Disaster Risk Management stakeholders in the country.

d) DIPECHO IV, 1st March 2014 - 30th June 2015, ***Bridging Disaster Risk Management with Resilience in Malawi's Disaster Prone Districts;*** DIPECHO IV includes some of the elements of the previous interventions complemented with a stronger focus on climate information services. The principal objective of DIPECHO IV project is to 'strengthen communities' adaptation and resilience to climate-related disasters in Salima, Chikwawa and Nsanje districts'. The specific objective is to ' reduce vulnerabilities to climate-related disasters in Salima, Chikwawa and Nsanje by enhancing preparedness, strengthening response capacity and shoring up communities' resilience'.[6]

All DIPECHO projects were implemented in three districts of Malawi: Chikwawa, Nsanje, and Salima. This is explained by the fact that the three target districts are considered among those most affected by climate-related risks (flood and drought) according to the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA).[7] During different rounds of DIPECHO initiatives, different consortia have been managing the implementation of the activities in the target districts.

[6] DIPECHO IV project document

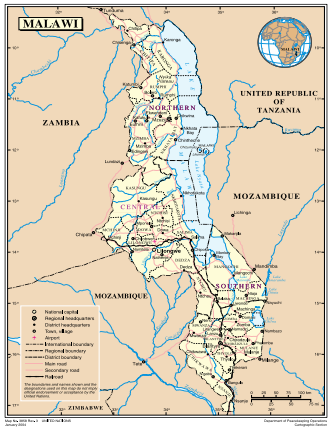
[7] http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/napa/mwi01.pdf

BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT IN MALAWI

The DIPECHO IV project is administered by a consortium that includes three main partners. In Chikwawa district, it is the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) (the implementing partner of Christian Aid); in Salima districts - COOPI, and in Nsanje district – Goal Malawi. DIPECHO IV is largely based on the results achieved within the previous DIPECHO interventions in Malawi.

COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

To better recognize the challenges the DRM sector in Malawi is facing and to better appreciate the progresses made within DIPECHO programming, it is important to recognize the broader development context in the country. The indicators below help to understand the context and the depth of challenges any development intervention might potentially be confronted with in Malawi.



Malawi is among the poorest countries in the world, ranked 170 out of 186 in Human Development Report (HDR) 2014.[8] It is a landlocked country where poverty is widespread, with over 50% of population below the poverty line and 25% below the food poverty line level.[9] The population is expected to double by the year 2020.[10] The Country is characterized by a heavy burden of diseases, evidenced by high levels of child and adult mortality rates and high prevalence of tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS and other tropical diseases.[11] HIV/AIDS prevalence rate among adults is one of the highest in the world.

Table 1: Summary Statistics[12]

Indicators	Parameters
Population in 2012 (estimated, 000)	15,906
GDP: Gross domestic product (million current US$)	5,653
Urban population growth rate (average annual %)	4.2
Rural population growth rate (average annual %)	3.1
Urban population in 2012 (%)	16.0
Life expectancy at birth (females and males, years) 2010-2015	55.2/54.9
Infant mortality rate (per 1 000 live births) 2010-2015	86.1
Literacy level 2013[13]	76.9%
HIV/Aids prevalence rate among adults 2013[14]	10,3%

[8] Human Development Report, 2014
[9] World Bank, http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/malawi/overview
[10] Vision 2020, Malawi
[11] WHO, Country Cooperation Strategy, Malawi, 2014:http://www.who.int/countryfocus/cooperation_strategy/ccsbrief_mwi_en.pdf
[12] http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=malawi
[13] World Bank, http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/malawi/overview
[14] UNAids, http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/malawi/

BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT IN MALAWI

The country's development priorities are defined in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II) 2011 – 2016, which is the second medium term national development strategy.[15] The MGDS II is built around six broad thematic areas, namely: Sustainable Economic Growth; Social Development; Social Support and Disaster Risk Management; Infrastructure Development; Improved Governance; and Cross Cutting Issues. In the Malawian context, disaster risk management is closely linked with the social support system, issue which will be explained in the next section.

Acknowledging the importance of consolidating the efforts of developmental partners towards building resilience in Malawi, the Government of Malawi in partnership with the UN agencies has launched a resilience project in 2014.[16] The project aims to build the resilience of vulnerable communities to recurrent climatic shocks and enhancing their productivity to achieve food and nutrition security. Importantly, the project represents the turn of UN development modality in Malawi from 'doing business in parallel' to 'doing business together' where all UN agencies commit themselves to consolidate efforts to work as one.

COUNTRY HAZARD PROFILE

Malawi faces a number of natural hazards. Among the most critical ones are seasonal floods and droughts (dry spells). The magnitude, frequency and impact of disasters have been increasing in light of climate change, population growth and environmental degradation. Malawi is particularly vulnerable to climate-related disasters, which have affected over 21mln people between 1979 and 2008.[17] The analytical study indicated that annual flood damage in the Shire River Basin resulted in an average loss of 0.7% of GDP ($9 million) per year. Elsewhere in the country, drought caused an average economic loss of 1% annually ($13 million).[18] For a country where 84% of population lives in rural areas and where about 11mln are engaged in smallholder subsistence farming, climate extremes-related shocks negatively affect highly sensitive livelihoods and economies. Often, flood and drought are triggered by human behaviour.

In the past 20 years, unsustainable use of resources resulted in a significant environmental degradation in Malawi. Malawi's forests are disappearing at a rate of 1.4% per annum, which is explained by the dependence on subsistence agriculture, excessive selling of wood to generate income, and dependence on wood-generated energy. Deforestation also results in depletion of surface water resources. According to the 1995 Malawi Social Indicator Survey, 48,7% of the Country's population lacks access to safe water and only 6% has access to improved sanitation.

A large part of the population regularly experiences food insecurity at the household level: Malawi has one of the highest levels of malnutrition in sub-Saharan Africa with about 50% of children less than five years of age and 9% of mothers suffering from chronic protein energy malnutrition.[19] According to the National

[15] The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II), 2011-2016

16 "Building the capacity of vulnerable households to meet their basic needs and withstand shocks in Phalombe" project

[17] DIPECHO IV Project document

[18] Malawi Economic Vulnerability and Disaster Risk Assessment

[19] Vision 2020, Malawi

Food Security Forecast,[20] the total number of people who will not be able to meet their annual food requirement during the 2013/14 consumption period is 1,461, representing 9.5% of total national population.

In such a context, population vulnerability to natural disasters is exacerbated by the chronic poverty and, on the other way around, the poverty trap is reinforced by the recurrent disasters and their negative consequences for the livelihood of at-risk populations. This explains why disaster risk management interventions are closely intertwined with poverty eradication strategies. The overarching national development strategy, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) II 2011 - 2016 explicitly recognizes that '…disasters also increase poverty …' and calls upon the need to '…address disaster risks for the socio-economic development of the country….'[21]

Since natural resources form the principal source of social wellbeing and economic development in the Country, the consideration of a long-term sustainable development is inevitably linked with climate change adaptation measures. Already today Malawi is experiencing the adverse effects of climate change, such as prolonged dry spells, unpredictable rainfall patterns, floods, and increased temperatures. Much of a concern is human-induced climate change due to unsustainable resource management (dependence on rain-fed agriculture, reliance on biomass energy, etc.).[22] The national priorities to address climate change through building communities' and ecosystem resilience are laid down in The National Climate Change Policy (2012).[23]

In a context of extreme poverty, climate change and environmental degradation negatively affect the livelihoods of Malawians rendering them extremely vulnerable to disaster risks. Therefore, ***in the Malawian context, DRM requires careful consideration of complex issues of poverty reduction, climate change adaptation, and environmental degradation.*** To reveal the intrinsic correlation between these three domains – climate change adaptation, environmental degradation, and poverty reduction – forms the basis for building community resilience in Malawi.

Towards this end, DIPECHO programming in Malawi is focused on building community resilience through reducing socio-economic impact of disasters on the most vulnerable populations and through harnessing wealth creation by putting in place adequate DRM measures that go beyond emergency response to preparedness, prevention, and mitigation. To address community resilience it is envisaged that '…disaster management architecture includes the provision of safety nets for rural communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change'[24] as it is stipulated in the National Climate Change Policy.

20 Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee, National Food Security Forecast, April 2013 to March 2014
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MVAC%20Annual%20Report%20June%202013_FINAL.pdf

[21] The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II), 2011-2016

[22] The National Climate Change Policy, Environmental Affairs Department, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Management, 2012

[23] Ibid.

24 Ibid.

This principle of linking disaster management with provision of safety nets is also used as the conceptual foundation for the design of the Community-Based DRR Evidence and Learning Framework (Appendix 2).

DRM POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The national system of Disaster Risk Management in Malawi is in its infant stage.

The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) under the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development was established through the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act of 1991[25] and has the primary responsibility for coordinating and directing DRM-related activities in the Country. It is the only agency in the Country dealing with civil protection issues. While the responsibilities of the DoDMA covers the whole vertical of the public administration (from national through district and area to village levels) its capacities are extremely limited. The MGDS II has acknowledged much of these limitations. In general terms, the DRM sector in Malawi is characterized by:

- Profound capacity gap with limited investment in knowledge and education for disaster risk reduction
- Predominant focus on relief and in limited cases rehabilitation rather than prevention and preparedness.
- Weak policy and institutional frameworks
- Detachment of the national level from district, areas, and village levels
- Large number of (international) organizations running multiple interventions at the local level with little if any coordination with the local authorities
- Lack of coordination between multiple stakeholders at national and local levels

From 2005 onwards, the efforts of the Government have been supported by UNDP in Malawi with the aim to establish a comprehensive disaster risk management system in the Country. In the last five years some visible progress has been made at the national level. Among the most important achievements in the recent years is the development of the draft Disaster Risk Management Act. The Act aims at defining the comprehensive and integrated DRM framework in Malawi, establishing effective institutional mechanisms for DRM, and defining DRM funding arrangements. Annex 5 illustrates the National DRM Structure in Malawi as it is envisaged by the Act.[26] However important this work is, it is not finalized and put into full implementation yet. Up until now the Act is at the stage of the zero-draft.[27] Despite that, already at this stage the DoDMA has started the realization of the provisions stipulated in the Act. Thus, the process has been initiated to design the District Contingency Plans, for instance.

The potential realization of the Act should be considered in the light of the following fundamental

25 Disaster Preparedness and Relief Arrangements http://www.malawilii.org/files/mw/legislation/consolidated-act/33:05/disaster_preparedness_relief_act_pdf_17349.pdf

26 The structure is based on the provisions of the Disaster Risk Management Act, which is not official yet.

27 Zero Draft National Disaster Risk Management Act. ***Only after the completion of this study and triggered by the devastating flood in December – February 2015, the Cabinet of Ministers of Malawi approved the much awaited National Disaster Risk Management Policy on 4th February 2015***

constrains specific to the DRM sector in Malawi:

- Critical lack of financial resources at all levels (only 0.016 % allocated from the national budget to DRM activities, which is far below the internationally recognized 1% threshold)[28]
- Critical lack of human resources at all levels: highly understaffed at the national and district levels. For example, DoDMA has only one paid staff in only 14 out of 28 districts
- Low level of awareness on DRM issues among other national, district, area, and village level stakeholders
- Absence of multi-hazard risk assessment tools and capacity[29]
- Undeveloped institutional and regulatory frameworks within the Country
- Poor integration of DRM into development planning and implementation[30]
- Lack of integration of DRR and Climate Change Adaptation Agenda (CCAA) both at the national and district levels[31]

To fill in the coordination gap at the national level, the Government launched the National DRM platform in February 2013. It deemed to serve as a coordination mechanism to enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination for sustainability of disaster risk management. It includes representatives from the government ministries and departments, academia, human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, district commissioners, civil protection committees, disaster risk management officers from Karonga, Dedza, Phalombe, Mchinji Nkhatabay, Blantyre, Nsanje, UN agencies and other development partners. Whether this structure is viable to facilitate the coordination among multiple stakeholders is yet to be seen.

In such context, a large number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operational in Malawi has been left in charge of the whole spectrum of disaster risk management at the village, area, and partly at the district level. Often, they pursue their mandatory responsibilities with various degree of engagement with the local authorities and only haphazard coordination efforts with each other and with the national authorities.

DRM AT LOCAL LEVEL: OVERVIEW AND LESSONS LEARNT

DIPECHO initiatives are designed to address the local DRM-related issues. In the Malawian context the focus is on district, area, and village levels. The structure of the district level local authorities includes the appointed District Counsellor and the multiple committees under his/her supervision. The District Executive Committee has the primary responsibility to approve district-level developmental priorities, define activities and allocate funds. All other committees have advisory, coordination, and monitoring functions. The District civil protection committee (DCPC) is responsible for the DRM-related issues but there are no budget allocations for DRM to the local government, which significantly limit any activities of DCPCs.

28 National Progress Report on the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2009 – 2011)

[29] Ibid.

30 Ibid.

[31] "Evaluation of DG ECHO's disaster preparedness and DRR actions in Southern Africa & Indian Ocean", November 2011

Important to note is that, in parallel to the formal vertical of the public administration, there is a system of 'traditional authorities' at the village and area levels. Their engagement in any local-level initiative is crucial to ensure involvement of the population as in most of the cases they would not go against the will of traditional authorities and be engaged in any initiative without their prior blessing. Within the three districts targeted by DIPECHO IV project and included in the learning research, the following lessons have been documented:

Lesson 1: At the local level there is some awareness about national priorities and strategies regarding DRM and CCA, but very little engagement in practical processes of implementation of any of them (for instance, there are regular meetings organized by DoDMA for its staff but due to extreme lack of resources not all district DRM officers are able to participate being thereby excluded from the loop).

Lesson 2: The large number of various committees at the district level quite often hinders an effective coordination of efforts (not only in DRM-related activities); this system is replicated at the village level generating the same level of inefficiency and increased transaction costs.

Lesson 3: The engagement of CPCs in the local-level DRM activities are largely left to the 'mercy' of NGOs who may or may not coordinate their efforts with the district level authorities; at the village level the situation is different, since the engagement of the population is largely predetermined by the level of engagement of the traditional authorities.

Lesson 4: The importance to engage traditional authorities has resulted in a 'dependency trap' for developmental actors, whereby it is expected by such traditional authorities to be rewarded for their engagement (for instance, receiving benefits from a project even if they are not qualified to according to the beneficiary selection criteria).

Lesson 5: Strong 'dependency mentality' has been also documented among local population, who largely rely on the support of government and international partners in case of disaster, which in turn divert their efforts from prevention and preparedness to a significant extent.

Lesson 6: Extreme lack of resources at the DCPC level significantly hinders the engagement of local authorities in various DRM-related initiatives, unless there are 'allowances' offered for participation (for instance, allowances to participate in a training course, or a coordination meeting, and suchlike). This situation is exacerbated by the recently agreed 'ban on allowances' among international donor community. Instead, a 'full board' model is offered whereby all the expenses are covered but no cash is paid for participation. This has been mentioned as one of the main obstacles in the efforts to engage local authorities.

The Main Lesson Learned: the district level is exactly where the two main 'streams' are confronting each other. On one hand, the national level policy developments that are largely focused on setting up the system, strategic priorities, and regulations. On the other hand, the emerging local level practical developments that are focused on addressing the most pressing challenges for the communities

(establishing flood EWS within a selected number of communities, for instance). Quite often, due to little coordination of efforts on both sides of the 'stream', there is a need for additional adjustments (preferably at the early stages) to ensure alignment and complementarity of efforts at national and local level. Only then, it would be possible to achieve the expected results. Some practical examples will be provided in the case-studies further in the document.

DIPECHO Programming in Malawi: Progress to date

The complexity of the challenges at the local level requires a complex and integrated approach from developmental partners. Often the output of one project is the input for another, or different actors tackle the same issues with different modalities, creating such a complex groundwork of developmental partners and initiatives that it is hardly possible to define and attribute good practices to one or another partner. From this perspective, changes are more visible while addressing a single intervention like DIPECHO project with a very short life span. Indeed, the learning research is better positioned to extrapolate on DIPECHO achievements through addressing the 'good practices' across all its interventions.

With the focus on three districts, namely Salima, Chikwawa, and Nsanje, the following good practices have been documented during the course of DIPECHO programming in Malawi:

1. Community-Centred Flood EWS (F-EWS)
2. District Risk Mapping
3. Community-Based Resilience Models: Linking DRM with Poverty Reduction
4. Strengthening Local DRM Structures
5. Exit Strategy: Transformational Growth

GOOD PRACTICE I: COMMUNITY-CENTRED FLOOD EWS

Flood Early Warning Systems (F-EWS) in Malawi is a good practice that has been acknowledged as a particular success by the evaluation of DIPECHO II.[32] The main and appreciated feature is the truly community - or rather intercommunity - approach whereby villages upstream are monitoring the level of water and calling by mobile phones their counterparts downstream. In the absence of any governmental support this system is operational, low-cost, and is fully owned by the communities.

Within the DIPECHO programming, 'river alliances' were created in the target communities along the two main river basins in Malawi: namely the Shiva River basin and the Kachitsa River basin. In the absence of any flood EWS at the national and local levels, the progress made within the DIPECHO programming creates preconditions for in-time response to flood risk at the community level.

The 'river alliances' were established across the target communities to coordinate the preparedness, response and mitigation activities between communities downstream and upstream along the Shiva and Kachitsa River Basins. The 'river alliances' have representatives in each community among the members of the village civil protection committees (VCPCs). With the support of the project, a number of river gauges were established in the selected areas to monitor the water level in each river. The 'river alliance' team is equipped with communication means (cell phones, megaphones) and transportation means (bicycles), and supported with a number of training events (river-gauge management, GPS, advocacy training, etc.)

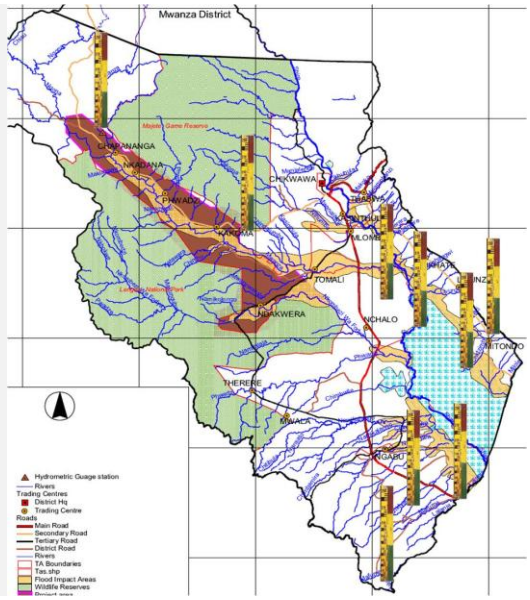
[32] Ibid.

Case of Shire River System

Nsanje District

The Shire River basin lies in the southern part of the Great East African Rift Valley system. Shire river flows approximately 410 km from Mangochi to Ziu Ziu in Mozambique, where it drains into Zambezi River. The river is divided into Lower, Middle, and Upper sections. The river has periods of high levels and low levels. The worse period of high level was from 1979 to 1984, where a record rise of 1.83 m during the wet season of 1978/79 was registered. Hot spells are common in spring: daytime surface temperatures can reach 60°C causing rapid desiccation.

During the high levels of the Shiver River downstream communities are often exposed to flood risk that generates cascading risks to their livestock, health, housing, and income. The floods result from the excessive rain falls occurring during the rainy season, slow runoff due to high water table area along the Shiva river, but also largely due to unsustainable use of natural resources at the upstream. Starting from DIPECHO II much effort has been invested in establishing the 'flood EWS' along the Shire River Basin. In Traditional Authority Mbenje, a community-based 'river alliance' has been established across Mbenje communities (including Mbenje, Nyang'a and Mnembe communities downstream and Nguluwe and Anne communities upstream). The river alliance has been established bringing upper and lower communities together in dialogue on how to manage the flood risk. The F-EWS includes a system of river gauges (Picture 1) that has been installed to measure the river water level. It has also been equipped with communication and transportation means as well as with the necessary training courses (Picture 3). Moreover, since a large portion of the flood risk derives from the human factor (unsustainable land management), lower river community members are organizing 'drama' performances to communicate to their neighbors upstream on how humans can contribute to flood and what kind of consequences that might have for the communities downstream. As a result of such dialogue, the upper river communities start putting more efforts in riverbank stabilization through tree planting (Picture 2).



Picture 1: System of river gauges in the Shire River Basin

Picture 2: Tree nursery in Mbenje village, Nsanje district

Picture 3: Training courses for river alliances: how to take measurements from the river gauges

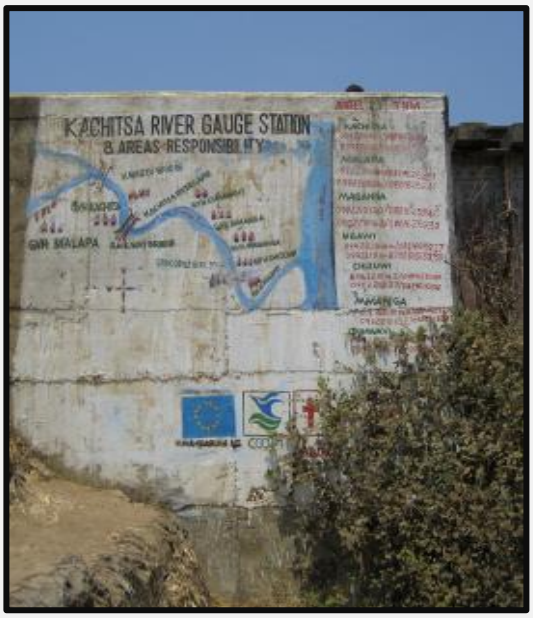
Case of Linthipe River Alliance

Salima District

The Linthipe River basin lies within the tropics of the southern end of the Great East African Rift Valley system. Linthipe River flows approximately 30 km from Malapa GVH to Chizuwi GVH, where it drains into Lake Malawi. The river is divided into Lower and Upper sections. The river has periods of high levels and low levels. The worse period of high level was 2009, where a record rise of over 250 m and 450 m at Kachitsa and Malapa GVHs respectively was registered. Hot spells are common in the GVHs along the Linthipe river and daytime surface temperatures can reach over 30°C in the months of September through November.

Due to extensive rainfalls the Linthipe River in Salima district is often the cause of flash flooding in the communities downstream. In TAs Kambwiri, Pemba and Maganga a community-based 'river alliance' has been established across 10 communities (including 8 downstream and 2 upstream communities) with the purpose to manage flood risk and prevent flooding of the downstream communities (Picture 4).

In the upper land, in the communities of Malapa and Kachitsa GVHs, river gauge stations have been installed to monitor the water level. The members of the river alliance received communication equipment, transportation means, and were trained on how to monitor, register, and report the water level (Picture 5 and 6).



Picture 4: The map of Linthipe River with all the communities included in the 'river alliance', Kumuzu Railway bridge

Picture 5: The river gauge station in Kumuzu village, Kachitsa CPC, Salima

Picture 6: The river gauge in Kamuzu, with Linthipe river in the background

Recommendations

The establishment of community-centred flood EWS (F-EWS) is an obvious achievement within DIPECHO programming. However, for the effective functioning of the system it is important to address two main challenges:

- ***In the short run: address F-EWS process gaps.*** Even though there are cell phones provided to the members of 'river alliances' and they have been thought how to respond to increased water levels, not in all cases they have adequate air time to spread the text message across the communities, or there is no easy-to-access electricity sources to simply recharge the phones (in some cases, people have to travel a long distance to charge the phones). Many of the process gaps has already been revealed within the study commissioned by COOPI, UNDP, and Z-GIS in 2011[33]. It is recommended to develop a 'risk log' for F-EWS process and consider it as a part of the exit strategy to be addressed either within the DIPECHO IV or to be transferred to the owner of the system for future upgrading/improvement. Moreover, to ensure effective functioning of the system it is recommended to organize regular community drills to define weakness in the system and to timely address them.
- ***In the long run: integrate F-EWS into planning mechanisms at the national and community level.*** It is recommended to document each F-EWS and to integrate it into the national F-EWS, which is maintained and operated jointly by DoDMA and the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services, the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development.[34] In case of Shiva river alliances, it might be potentially useful to integrate the Shire River flood EWS with the efforts of the WB under the project on the Shiva River Basin Management 2012-2018.[35] The project aims to support the Government of Malawi to develop Shire River Basin planning framework to improve land and water management for ecosystem and livelihood benefits in target areas. In the case of Linthipe river alliance the historical, hydrological and socio-economic analysis of flooding carried out by COOPI, UNDP, and Z-GIS can be potentially used for improved F-EWS and Climate information system.[36]

[33] Hazard Mapping Capacity, COOPI, UNDP, Z-GIS, 2011: http://www.mw.undp.org/content/dam/malawi/docs/environment/Hazard%20Mapping%20Capacity.pdf
[34] Ibid.
[35] Malawi, Shire River Basin management Program Project: http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P117617/malawi-shire-river-basin-management-project?lang=en
[36] Hazard Mapping Capacity, COOPI, UNDP, Z-GIS, 2011: http://www.mw.undp.org/content/dam/malawi/docs/environment/Hazard%20Mapping%20Capacity.pdf

GOOD PRACTICE II: DISTRICT RISK MAPPING

During DIPECHO projects COOPI - in partnership with the Department of Geoinformatics - Z_GIS at the University of Salzburg - has developed district-specific hazard maps for each district of Malawi to be used for hazard-informed development planning and implementation. Through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques and in combination with GPS collected data, community hazards maps have further incorporated information as: the areas that have previously been affected by disasters, evacuation points, access routes into and out of the village, etc. In some cases, satellite images have also been used to help the communities to clearly identify certain vulnerable areas (Participatory GIS). As a result, the district risk maps (http://www.gi4drr.org/?page_id=61) have been produced and distributed to the local authorities to be used as inputs for development planning across various sectors (health, environment, food security, etc.). ***In the absence of any risk-related data, the district risk maps provide the first input to the local authorities and international developmental partners for resilient development planning.***

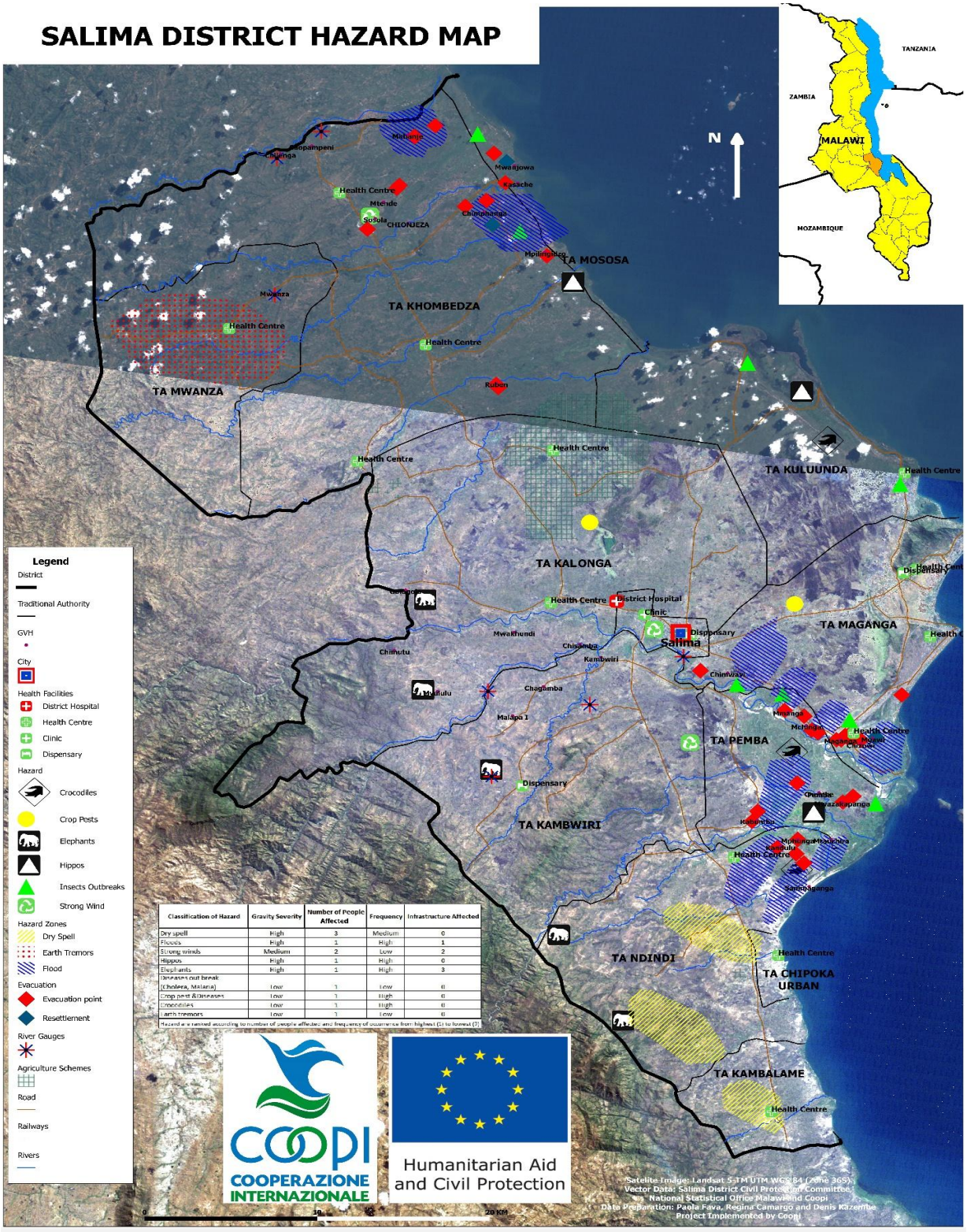
The district risk maps are presented in the "Disaster Risk Reduction Training Manual for Civil Protection Committees' and 'GIS Manual for DRR in Africa" developed by COOPI in collaboration with the International Institute for Applied System Analysis (IIASA). The Government of Malawi, the WB and UNDP acknowledged the importance of this work and incorporated the district risk maps into the Malawi Spatial Data Portal, a public platform for GIS Data to support development in Malawi (www.masdap.mw)

In 2014, the work has been continued by COOPI and Z_GIS to develop the comprehensive 'Vulnerability assessment to floods at the district and GVH level in Salima, Malawi'[37] and 'Resilience Assessment in the context of food security at the district and GHV level in Salima, Malawi'[38]

Recommendations:

It is important to continue strengthening the capacities of local authorities to read, interpret the district risk maps, and to inform their developmental planning adequately. In the meantime, it is also important to encourage the non-governmental partners (a large spectrum of INGOs, NGOs, faith-based organizations, etc.) to use the risk maps for their developmental work. Both proposed recommendations require longer-term engagement and efforts that go beyond the scope of the DIPECHO IV project.

[37] Vulnerability assessment to floods at the district and GVH level in Salima, Malawi, COOPI and Z_GIS, 2014.
[38] Resilience assessment in the context of food security at the district and GVH level in Salima, Malawi, COOPI and Z_GIS, 2014



Picture 7: Salima District Hazard Map

GOOD PRACTICE III: COMMUNITY-BASED RESILIENCE MODELS; LINKING DRM WITH POVERTY REDUCTION

The DIPECHO programming in Malawi has showcased the viability of a variety of community resilience-building models. These models allow to address complex issues of DRM/CCA, environmental degradation, income generation and food security. For instance, it encompasses a range of activities that address conservative agriculture, climate-smart agriculture, riverbank stabilization and tree planting, pass-on livestock schemes, saving and loans revolving funds, drought/flood tolerant crops, and many more. These activities help communities to meet their daily needs while at the same time create preconditions for longer-term impact through reducing vulnerabilities and exposure to disaster risk. ***Solutions that help addressing DRM/CCA/environmental sustainability and social support are at the core of community-based resilience models in Malawian context.***

Case of Savings and Loans Revolving Fund,

GVH Mbenje, Nsanje district

The village savings and loans bank is not a new concept in the development field, however, the model used within DIPECHO programming in Malawi has a new dimension in it: it offers favourable loans to the victims of disasters and often grants (in-cash contributions) to reimburse some of the post-disaster losses for the most vulnerable community members. Such savings and loans revolving funds operate as a prototype of a 'community-based disaster insurance scheme' allowing the members of the community to mobilized pooled resources (in cash) to recover after a disaster, when needed. Through introducing to the population the concepts of savings, upfront payment, and community donations to the disaster victims and thereby further strengthening social capital and trust within the community members, such mechanism creates preconditions for 'community-based disaster insurance schemes' in Malawi in the future.

Case of Grain Silos

Chimwavi Village, Salima district

A similar concept of disaster preparedness is laid down in the mode of Grain Silos widely used in various villages. The idea is to collectively grow and reserve grains to be used in case of a disaster (flood or drought) where food security risks can significantly undermine community's cooping capacities. Through the DIPECHO programming the village community has received the initial input of grain seeds and fertilizers, technical assistance in building up the grain silos, and in cultivating grain fields. Thus, with the support from DIPECHO programming, the Maganga community has established the grain silos in Chimwavi. The community members collectively and voluntarily cultivate the common grain field to ensure adequate reserves of maize. In response to 2012 flooding, eight bags (15 kg each) of seeds were used to support the most affected families in the community. In response to strong winds in 2013, 30 bags (15 kg each) were used to support those who suffered the most from the disaster.

Such grain silos create a real mechanism for revolving resources - in this case the most important resource for the local communities, the grain seeds - to directly address communities' food insecurity. The challenge remains the use of fertilizers, which are of high costs, and without subsidies might not be affordable for the communities. Towards this end, it is recommended to consider bringing other donors (FAO, WFP, etc.) to support such grain silos networks, and ensure their longer-term sustainability.

This initiative is a lesson learned from the severe food crisis that hit the country in 2002. In Malawi, the strategic grain reserves have been set at 180,000 tons initially. For the purpose of calculation it was typically assumed that the cereal requirement was equivalent to some 160-175 kg per person per year and that a lead time of three months would be required to organize and receive additional supplies. However, in 2000 the government commissioned a study financed by the EC, that concluded that a maize buffer stock should be maintained between 30,000 and 60,000 metric tons. In February 2002, due to a combination of reasons including the reduction of the maize stock reserves, the government of Malawi declared a food emergency. Seven million people were put under threat in Malawi. The establishment of local networks of grain silos can be of a strategic significance for the Country, helping to minimize the risk of food insecurity and to increase the resilience of the local communities to various shocks.

Picture 8: Grain Silos in Chimwavi village, Salima district

Case of Tree Nursery

Mbenje village, Nsanje District

The village was targeted within DIPECHO I, II, III, and IV, whereby DIPECHO I was primarily focused on capacity development and raising public awareness, DIPECHO II on strengthening the VCPC, and DIPECHO III on increasing awareness of the whole community beyond the VCPC. Several achievements have been observed in this village. There is an overview of the hazard history in the village covering the period of 1973 – 2014. Population is aware of the impact of human behaviour on environment, and how ineffective use of natural resources can exacerbate the consequences of flood or drought.

This can potentially explain the fact that the community members put voluntary efforts to maintain the tree nursery established with the support of DIPECHO programming in the village. They have already planted over 200 trees along the Shire Riverbank aiming to reach 4000 trees. Out of discussions with the local community, it has become obvious that there is a clear understanding that tree planting helps stabilizing the river banks, thereby reducing the potential scale of future flooding in their village.

Picture 9: Tree Nursery, Mbenje village, Nsanje District

Case of Flood-Proof Housing

Namila Village, TA Mlilima, Chikwawa District

Within the DIPECHO programming much effort has been made to support the communities living with flood risk to have flood-proof housing. Through mobilizing local expertise, the model houses were built around the Chikwawa district to showcase a flood-proof house. The DIPECHO programming targeted the local artisans and the village communities providing them with the training courses on how to construct such houses. The model houses have stronger and elevated foundation to an extent that during the flood the water is not getting inside the houses. A member of Namila village in Chikwawa district has participated in one of such training courses. Afterwards, he decided to build a new house that would protect him and his family from a potential flood in the future.

Picture 10: Building a flood-proof house in Chikwawa district

Case of Renewable Energy

N'gawi Village, Salima district

In 2010 under the DIPECHO II project 'Support to vulnerable communities in the prevention and management of floods in Salima district in Malawi', COOPI introduced the concept of using renewable energy for livelihood protection. Solar panels were installed in the project implementation area along the Lake Malawi in Salima District. These devices ensure water supply for irrigation during the dry season and thus improved crop production, useful to support communities during a crisis. Such approach was based on acknowledging the importance of building communities' resilience to confront the cascading effects of risk of flooding, that can significantly increase communities' food insecurity in Malawi.

Recommendations:

DIPECHO programming in Malawi has given a start to multiple initiatives at the community level. Many of such initiatives have proven successful and viable. The challenge, however, remains in maintaining, scaling up, and replicating such initiatives. Importantly, such initiatives need to be carefully integrated into community, district, and area development plans and be further supported by state resources. Moreover, international and national NGOs operational in Malawi need to be better informed on such initiatives to build upon and consolidate efforts towards building community resilience. Towards this ends, it is recommended to:

a) organize a broad dissemination event or a series of events to present the initiatives developed within DIPECHO programming in Malawi to a wide range of development partners, including state and non-state actors;

b) continue efforts of consortium members towards better integration of such models into development planning at the village, area, and district levels;
c) consider organizing study-tours at the local level to ensure cross-district and cross-village learning and further replication of already developed initiatives.

GOOD PRACTICE IV: STRENGTHENING LOCAL DRM STRUCTURES

After the adoption of the Decentralization Policy and Enactment of the Local Government Act (1998), local authorities became fully responsible for the development and execution of local development plans. However, due to limited resources, not all of such efforts have been backed with adequate technical and material support from the national level. The local authorities at the district, area, and village level are basically left with no resources to support their DRM efforts.

Only in 14 out of 28 districts there are Disaster Risk Management Officers, which is explained by the fact that the capacities of the DoDMA are extremely limited and hardly reach the district level. The efforts of developmental partners in supporting local (district, area, village) level civil protection structures are the only means to keep the system viable. In 2002, DIPECHO I was the only project that was supporting the local CPCs, which has remained one of the priority programming areas across all DIPECHO projects till now.

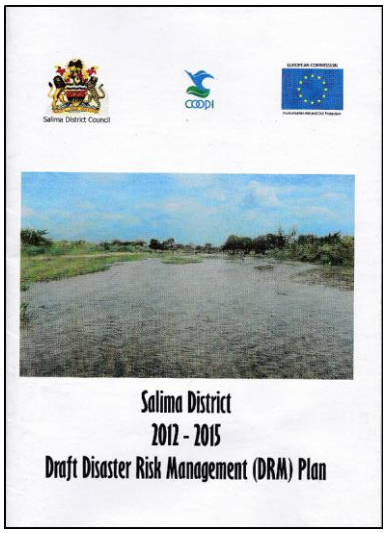
DIPECHO programming has been for years the only source of support to the efforts of the local authorities towards DRR through building their capacities, supporting them with means to reach out to the local communities, and providing technical assistance for planning and implementing DRR activities at the local level. The development of District Contingency Plans can be very illustrative and can be considered as a result of a good practice of supporting local DRM authorities in Malawi. Till now, only 7 districts out of 28 have received assistance in developing their Contingency Plans. Out of those seven districts, the three districts targeted within DIPECHO IV projects have managed to produce their Contingency Plans. Despite the fact that the plans are not yet reviewed and approved by the national authority and that they still present many limitations and shortcomings,[39] the same development of the plans as a process and an outcome can be considered as an achievement for the local level DRM in Malawi.

[39] For instance, in the absence of a multi-hazard risk assessment methodology in the Country and the fundamental lack of accurate data, the figures provided in the plan cannot be fully verified.

Case of Salima Disaster Risk Reduction Plan

Salima district

The development of the Salima Disaster Risk Reduction Plan 2012 – 2015 in consultation with ACPCs and VCPC is a vivid example of the capacity development efforts of COOPI in Salima District. The funding for this specific activity were provided by the DFID funded DISCOVER project, however, it would not be possible without the continuous support to Salima district DRM Officer and the DCPC since DIPECHO I through strengthening their capacities and creating thereby necessary preconditions for the development of the District DRR Plan. Since 2008 COOPI is engaged in strengthening the local civil protection committees providing them with the range of training courses such as how to develop evacuation plans, rehabilitate evacuation routs, report on incidents, or open a bank accounts to invest in mitigation and response work. Importantly, within DIPECHO initiatives the Vulnerability to flood risk and Resilience assessment were carried out that significantly contributed to the development of the Contingency plans.



Much effort has been made to support district, area, and village civil protection authorities also by GOAL Malawi and the EAM in Nsanje and Chikwawa districts respectively.

Recommendations:

The capacity development for DRR is a continuous process. This is particularly true in such a capacity-deprived setting as Malawi is. Especially for this reason, it is of utmost importance to better prioritize capacity development efforts at the local level. Towards this end, it is recommended to define the 'local level capacity development strategy for DRR in Malawi'. This should also help development partners to better synchronize their efforts and provide entry points for joint efforts in DRR, creating thereby increased synergy at the local level.

GOOD PRACTICE V: EXIT STRATEGY: TRANSFORMATIONAL GROWTH

Starting from 2008 the DIPECHO programming in Malawi has been supporting various DRM initiatives. With the overall objective to reduce the impact of natural disasters by strengthening local physical and human resources at high-risk areas, the DIPECHO projects are implemented through pilot activities to save lives and livelihoods at the community level.

The DIPECHO programming does not provide for the continuation of funding. During the learning research many stakeholders have mentioned this as a disadvantage of DIPECHO programme. The frustration is understandable when there are no other funds available to scale up the DIPECHO funded pilot initiatives that have received full traction and support by the communities.

Many practices initiated and piloted within the DIPECHO programming in Malawi have become the basis for larger DRM initiatives in the Country. The most significant case of building upon the DRM achievements and intensifying efforts in advancing community resilience is the Enhancing Community Resilience Programme (ECRP). The programme is jointly funded by DFID, Irish Aid and the Royal Norwegian Embassy with a total budget of 8.7 Million GBP and an implementation period of five years (2011 – 2016). It is implemented by two consortia led by Christian Aid (ECRP) and Concern Universal (DISCOVER) respectively. The members include Action Aid and CARE Malawi (ECRP) and COOPI, GOAL Malawi and Self Help Africa (DISCOVER).

The programme is designed with the aim 'to bring about a tangible and significant increase in the resilience of the most vulnerable communities located in disaster prone districts in Malawi, based firmly on (and scaling up) the community level successes which consortium members have achieved in recent years'.[40] Much of the quoted experience has been acquired by the partners within the framework of DIPECHO programming in Malawi. The ECRP performs as a platform to scale up the most successful initiatives towards increased resilience of the local communities in Malawi. Thus, the programme furthers the DIPECHO success in establishing community-based flood early warning system, strengthening the capacities of the CPCs at the local level, scaling up a variety of community-based resilience models through linking poverty reduction with DRR and CCA, using a range of modalities developed within DIPECHO programming to raise public awareness (drama performances, exchange visits of VCPCs, etc.), and in many more ways.

Another example is the case of FAO Malawi. FAO was one of the partners in the DIPECHO II project. Within the framework of the project, FAO implemented a variety of climate smart interventions: using early maturity crops or short-cycle varieties, or drought resistant seeds, or helping communities to manage seed systems through seed storage and seed recovery (seed loans) or crop diversification, etc. After the completion of the DIPECHO II project, FAO continued its activities under different initiatives, having the possibility to scale up the interventions that proved to be feasible and viable for the local context. In doing

[40] DISCOVER project proposal

so, FAO was implementing operational modalities specific to its portfolio and proven in various countries. In this sense, there was not much novelty in its programming in Malawi. However, the DIPECHO funding helped to fine-tune FAO's modalities for the Malawian context. In the meantime, the local partners took up the technical expertise brought by FAO to the DIPECHO project to further foster climate-smart agriculture in the local communities. Thus, the members of the ECRP consortia have been able to improve their interventions thanks to the expertise acquired within DIPECHO programming in close cooperation with FAO and other relevant partners.

Another example of successful replication of a pilot initiative supported within the DIPECHO programming is the use of model-houses by Habitat for Humanity. When Habitat for Humanity presented the idea of building model houses for the local communities in Malawi, the District Executive Committees (DECs) of the tree target districts directed them to the model-houses already developed within the DIPECHO project. DIPECHO model-houses were based on local construction materials and were affordable for local farmers. Therefore, Habitat for Humanity decided to use the already successful DIPECHO model-house to further promote the idea of flood-proof houses among the local communities in Malawi.

Such developments demonstrate the viability of many pilot initiatives supported within the DIPECHO programming. As it is often the case, the output of one initiative becomes the input for another. The first DIPECHO projects were the only source of funding for DRR activities in the Country at the local level. Consequently, many of the initiatives developed and piloted within DIPECHO have been taken up by the partners for further implementation. Thus, DIPECHO programming ensured its exit strategy by bringing its pilot initiatives to the level of potential replication and scale up, creating thereby a start of a more transformative growth of the communities in Malawi.

Conclusion

The main conclusion is that DIPECHO programming in Malawi has provided much needed 'safety belt' for many potential victims of natural disasters today and in the future. Through maintaining the focus on local communities, DIPECHO programming show-cased a number of useful and viable solutions for DRR. With a certain level of generalization at least five good practices can be distinguished throughout the implementation of DIPECHO projects during 2007 - 2014:

1. Community-centred flood EWS
2. District Risk Mapping
3. Community-based resilience models: linking DRM with poverty reduction
4. Strengthening local DRM structures
5. Exit Strategy: transformational growth

Through developing a variety of initiatives for the local communities, DIPECHO programming triggered positive dynamics at the local level in the three target districts of Chikwawa, Salima and Nsanje. Such initiatives were designed and implemented keeping in mind the nexus between climate change adaptation, environmental degradation, and poverty reduction. In a country with a situation of chronic poverty as Malawi is, such a modality to tackle disaster risk has been proven to be the most adequate. DIPECHO programming helped to engage community members, address their priority disaster risks, support their livelihoods, and create some potential for future DRR efforts.

DIPECHO programming has also created a solid basis for different organizations to strengthen their expertise in DRM/CCA in Malawi and to transform their expertise into new forms of resilience-focused development intervention. ECRP is one of such examples.

Most importantly, DIPECHO programming is recognized and appreciated by the local communities. Throughout the learning study, the population of the target communities demonstrated their sincere interest in the DIPECHO activities, enthusiasm to further similar activities, and to develop new ones.

However important the role of the DIPECHO programming was so far, it has provided only a fraction of the necessary safety and security for the local communities in Malawi. This implies that the fight against poverty, environmental degradation, and climate change as the main determinants of disaster risk for Malawian population, needs continuation. Moreover, given the rise in the level of vulnerability in the Country, this fight requires much more intensified and better coordinated efforts among international donor community, local development partners and the Government of Malawi.

***

Appendices

This section provides a list of appendices to support the reading of the report.

APPENDIX 1: DEFINITIONS OF LESSONS LEARNT AND GOOD PRACTICES

Which emerging practice within the DIPECHO programming can be classified as 'good practice'?

- The emerging practices that have been supported and owned by the communities;
- The emerging practices that have addressed at least two of the three determinants of resilience-focused development in Malawi, namely: climate change, environmental degradation, and poverty reduction;
- The emerging practices that have been replicated/scaled up either within the implementation of the DIPECHO programming or within other development initiatives.

Which developments within the DIPECHO programming can be classified as 'lessons learned'?

- The key issues/observations (either positive or negative) that have a potential to hinder or to facilitate the realization of DIPECHO programming;
- The key issues/observations (either positive or negative) that can be informative for other initiatives in the DRM field in Malawi.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 2: COMMUNITY-BASED DRR EVIDENCE AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The proposed Community-based DRR Evidence and Learning Framework is informed by a number of concepts: first of all, COOPI's approach to environmental sustainability, whereby COOPI emphasizes the importance of conservation of natural and environmental resources in order to enhance DRR and thereby sustainable development.

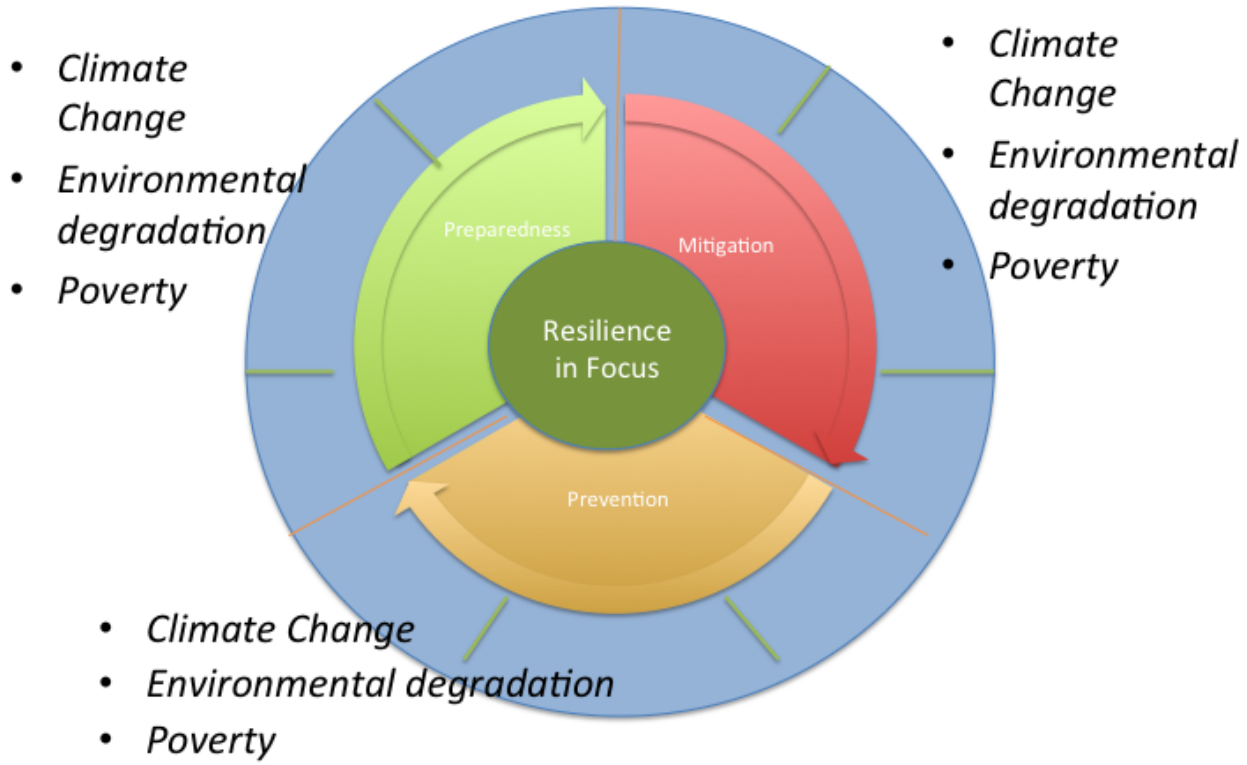
The framework is also informed by the concept of Integrated (Disaster) Risk Management. This implies risk management through addressing causes of a risk (therefore, prevention) or increasing capacities of a system to embrace the risk when it materializes (therefore, preparedness) or the consequences of a risk (therefore, mitigation) or any combination of the above mentioned. This concept is also very much in line with COOPI's approach towards DRM, which highlights the inseparability and complementarity of interventions aiming at prevention, mitigation, and preparedness.

And last but not least, the framework is informed by the resilience approach employed by the Government of Malawi and UN agencies to address the root causes of vulnerability at the community level. Issues related to poverty reduction and income generating activities are included in the Community-based DRR evidence and learning framework.

Each of the good practices identified within the learning research tackle at least two of the domains in the learning framework - climate change, environmental degradation, or poverty reduction - either in terms of prevention, preparedness, or mitigation. Thus, F-EWS addresses the prevention of environmental degradation (through – for instance - river bank stabilization), preparedness to climate change (through focusing on flood risk management), and poverty reduction (through supporting communities with necessary communication, transportation, and personal equipment means).

APPENDICES

Community-Based DRR Evidence and Learning Framework



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 3: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR LEARNING STUDY

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A LEARNING RESEARCH ON DIPECHO PROGRAMMING IN MALAWI.

Background

Cooperazione Internazionale (Coopi) in partnership with the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), Christian Aid and GOAL is implementing a Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) project titled "*Bridging Disaster Risk Management with Resilience in Malawi's Disaster Prone Districts"* with support from European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG-ECHO) under the Disaster Preparedness Facility DIPECHO. The Purpose of the action is to consolidate in a sustainable manner the progresses achieved in reducing vulnerabilities of communities to climate change.

As part of the development of best practices, communication, advocacy and visibility strategy of the consortium - which is a critical component in linking DRR to longer term initiatives supported by other development actors - the action will commission a research on DIPECHO and other DRM programming in Malawi. This research will draw lessons from previous DIPECHO actions implemented in Malawi including projects in Chikwawa, Salima and Nsanje for documentation and further replication in other districts. The learning research will identify and share learning with key stakeholders nationally and internationally to ensure lessons are translated into practice. The research will validate key findings in a broader context, looking at similar projects not only supported by DIPECHO but also by other funding partners. The research will analyze, synthesize and highlight successful software and hardware components for supporting DRR, including structures and systems established at community, district and national levels; changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices related to DRR and in the capacity to plan, mitigate and respond to disasters. The research should analyze how DRR is integrated into other governmental and non-governmental programmes and how successes achieved can support the full implementation of the DRR policy once in effect. Lastly, it is critical for this research to also incorporate some regional learning from Southern Africa, preferably also supported by DIPECHO.

Objectives of the Research

I. To facilitate evidence based learning, foster ownership and sustainability of DIPECHO programmes.
II. To ensure systematic regional learning and communication on DRR using Salima, Chikwawa and Nsanje as case studies.
III. To collate and share case studies that exemplifies good practices on DRR in Chikwawa, Nsanje and Salima
IV. To develop a DRR evidence and learning framework in conjunction with the Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA)
V. To develop a database for DRR/CCA interventions

APPENDICES

Scope of Work: Key Deliverables

1. Produce a report
2. Present research findings to national and regional findings
3. Develop a DRM evidence and Learning framework.
4. Develop a National database for DRR/CCA interventions.
5. Produce NPDRM

Key Research Areas

- Desk research into DRM programming, guiding policies and frameworks in Malawi and the region.
- Field research and field work to determine impact and acceptability, "what works best" and integration of DRM with other programmes/ Projects
- Interviews with Key stakeholders including government agencies, NGOs and UN agencies. Analysis of findings and production of research report and other associated products.
- Participate and present findings in national and regional workshops
- Develop DRR evidence and learning framework with support from CEPA
- Develop a National Database for DRR/CCA interventions

Working Modalities

The researcher will be directly responsible to the Christian Aid, Coopi and Goal who will provide overall guidance and support to the research process. The DIPECHO IV programme officers will work closely with the researcher on a day to day basis, providing support as needed. CA/GOAL/Coopi will provide on the ground support to the consultant.

Profile of Lead Consultant

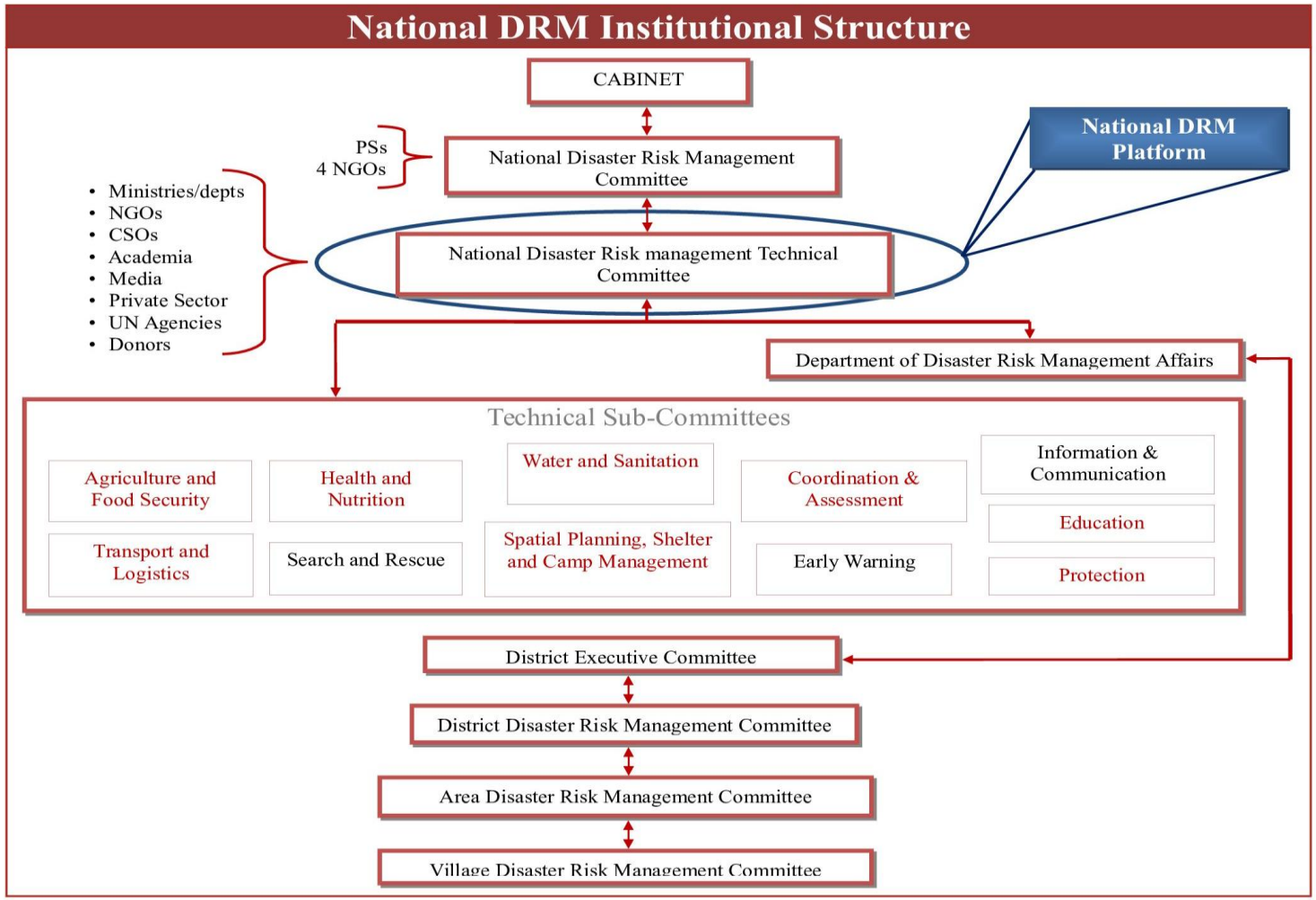
- An advanced Degree in Social Sciences, Agriculture, Development or related fields
- Experience in implementing and evaluating development projects particularly on DRR, Early warning systems (EWS), Weather forecasting, Food Security and Livelihoods.
- Sound knowledge of disaster, social and developmental issues in Malawi and Southern Africa.
- Possess strong research, analytical and writing skills including ability to analyse data with spss or any other statistical package.
- Demonstrate ability to facilitate meetings and negotiate effectively
- Flexible but able to observe agreed timeframes
- Traceable track record and reference

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 4: LIST OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED

Date	*Names*	*District*	*Position*	*Organization*
20/09/14	Blessings Kantema	Salima	Disaster Risk Management Officer	Salima District Council
20/09/14	Chimwavi CPC	Salima	Civil Protection Committee	Salima District Council
20/09/14	Kachitsa CPC	Salima	Civil Protection Committee	Salima District Council
20/09/14	Stedson Chiwandira	Salima	Disaster Risk Reduction Officer	Coopi
21/09/14	Noud Leenders	Lilongwe	DRM Advisor - DoDMA	UNDP - DoDMA
21/09/14	Charrison Tengatenga	Lilongwe	Programme Officer	Christian Aid
22/09/14	Yamikani Dakalira	Blantyre	Programme Officer	CEPA
23/09/14	Duncan Teputepu	Nsanje	Programme Manager	Goal
23/09/14	Dorothy Ngwira	Nsanje	Programme Coordinator	Goal
23/09/14	Boniface Kumwenda	Nsanje	Programme Manager	Goal
23/09/14	Dan Nzumara	Nsanje	Project Officer	Goal
24/09/14	Mbenje CPC	Nsanje	Civil Protection Committee	Nsanje District Council
24/09/14	Mt Samdoka	Nsanje	District Civil Protection Committee	Community Development
27/09/14	Kumbukani Mhango	Chikwawa	Project Officer	Evangelical Association of Malawi
27/09/14	Francis Kadzokoya	Chikwawa	Disaster Risk Management Officer	Chikwawa District Council
28/09/14	Mr. Linosi	Chikwawa	Meteorological Officer	Chikwawa ADD
28/09/14	Namira CPC	Chikwawa	Civil Protection Committee	Chikwawa District Council
29/09/14	Francesco Munde	Balaka	DRR Officer	Concern Universal
30/09/14	Steve Sakhama	Kasungu	District Environmental Officer	Kasungu District Council
31/09/14	Chesterman Kumwenda	Lilongwe	Programme Officer	FAO
18-19/09/14	Antonio Armentano	Lilongwe	Head of Country Office	Coopi
20 – 31/09/14	Aubrey Nyekanyeka	Salima	DRR Focal Point	Coopi

APPENDIX 5: THE NATIONAL DRM STRUCTURE IN MALAWI



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DIPECHO IV Programme

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

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