

Assessment report on mainstreaming and implementing disaster risk reduction measures in Malawi



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Acronyms and abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
CARE	Christian Action Research and Education
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
COVACA	Community Owned Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
DFID	Department for International Development
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department
DISCOVER	Developing Innovative Solutions with Communities to Overcome Vulnerability through Enhanced Resilience
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GIS	Geographical Information System
GoM	Government of Malawi
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
I-LIFE	Improving Livelihoods through Improving Food Security
ILO	International Labour Organization
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MVAC	Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDPRC	National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee
NDRM	National Disaster Risk Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
PADR	Participatory Assessment of Disaster Risks
PDNA	Post-Damage and Needs Assessment
PVCA	Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UNDA	United Nations Development Account

UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WFP	World Food Programme
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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The present report on Mainstreaming and Implementing Disaster Risk Reduction in Malawi was prepared within the framework of the United Nations Development Account project on strengthening capacities of African policy-makers to mainstream natural disaster risk reduction into national and regional development policies and strategies in Africa. The project was conceived and implemented jointly by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

The report was prepared under the overall guidance of Fatima Denton, Director of the Special Initiatives Division (SID) of ECA, and Sharon Rusu and Pedro Basabe, the current and former Head of UNISDR Regional Office for Africa, respectively. It also benefited from substantive guidance and recommendations from Isatou Gaye, Chief of the Green Economy and Natural Resources Section in the Special Initiatives Division.

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¹ Now with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Executive summary

This assessment report on mainstreaming and implementing disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures in Malawi was prepared within the framework of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in national and regional development strategies in support of both efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals and the attainment of sustainable development goals in Africa. The project was jointly conceived by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

The report presents findings on the assessment of progress and experiences in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into national development frameworks in Malawi. The assessment was commissioned jointly by the secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), ECA and UNISDR.

The study adopted both a quantitative and qualitative approach. Data were mainly collected from secondary sources, which were used to assess the prevalence, frequency and impacts of different disasters in Malawi. Qualitative data were collected via a comprehensive desk review of various documents and reports, which was complemented with key informant interviews. Several guiding frameworks were used in assessing the level of disaster mainstreaming in the country.

Summary findings

Main national disaster risks, disaster events and their impacts

The study results revealed that Malawi is exposed to a number of natural and human-induced hazards. Although most of the hazards can occur in all 28 districts of the country, 15 of these are more prone than others and were classified as the most disaster-prone districts by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA). The 2011 Climate Change Vulnerability Index by the British risk analysis firm Maplecroft ranks Malawi as 15 out of 16 countries with 'extreme risks' to climate change impacts in the world: Malawi is one of only four African countries in this category. Floods, dry spells, droughts, storms, hailstorms, road accidents, fire and disease outbreaks are the most common disasters, to which the country is exposed. However, floods and droughts are by far the most important disasters affecting Malawi in terms of their geographical spread, frequency and impacts on livelihoods and the national economy.

Malawi's national disaster profile, which dates back to 1946, has a record of more than 600 disaster events occurring in all 28 districts. According to current information available, the number of disaster events has been increasing since 1974, with the period from 2004 to 2013 recording the highest number of disasters. Some of the severe flood disasters experienced in Malawi occurred in Zomba in 1946, Lower Shire Valley in 1956 and 1989, Nkhata Bay in 1957, Phalombe in 1991, Karonga in 2001, Nsanje in 2012 and recently in Karonga, Nkhata Bay, Chikwawa, Zomba, Mangochi and Phalombe in 2013 (Nilsson et

al., 2010; Department of Disaster Management Affairs, 2013). Despite a number of disease outbreaks, very few were recorded over the previous decade. The highest number of storms was recorded in the previous two decades, 110 cases between 1994 and 2003 and 126 cases between 2004 and 2013. The country also witnessed three major earthquakes in Karonga (1966), in Salima (1989) with tremors in Dedza, Mchinji, Kasungu, and in Karonga (2009) with tremors in Chitipa and other districts.

Recurrent disasters in Malawi have had far-reaching impacts on food, energy, health, water and other sectors of the economy. In particular, these disaster events have undermined the stability of livelihoods among the most affected communities. Direct losses related to disasters in Malawi have included physical damage to assets comprising buildings, infrastructure, industrial plants, standing crops, grain stores, livestock and social infrastructure, as well as loss of human life and injury. In addition, secondary losses related to disasters have also had an impact on gross domestic product (GDP), fiscal performance, increased poverty levels and HIV infection.

Past, ongoing and planned disaster risk reduction interventions

The Government of Malawi has in recent years recognized that disasters are hindering the country's growth and poverty reduction efforts, as spelled out in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). Disaster risk management (DRM), which is a combination of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster management concepts, was therefore adopted as one of the core focus areas of the Strategy, whose long-term goal vis-à-vis disaster management is to reduce the socioeconomic impact of disasters and to build a strong disaster management mechanism. The MGDS

therefore provides strategic direction to disaster risk management in Malawi. In pursuance of this disaster risk reduction strategy, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in Malawi has in the past decade not only advocated a paradigm shift from a reactive to a more proactive approach, it has put in place institutional mechanisms and developed policies and strategies for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction at all levels in the country.

The Government continues to highlight disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction as key focus areas for achieving sustainable economic growth, as reflected in the MGDS II (2012–2016). In this document, it is pointed out under theme 3 that the magnitude, frequency and impact of disasters have been increasing owing to climate change, population growth and environmental degradation. In response to these challenges, the Government will implement a number of strategies, including the strengthening of DRM coordination mechanisms, the development of an integrated national early warning system and the implementation of mitigation measures in disaster-prone areas.

Extent to which disaster risk reduction is integrated or mainstreamed into national, sectoral and local level strategies and policies

The need to pass a Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act in 1991 arose from the flash floods that occurred in 1989 in Phalombe district in southern Malawi and from the realization that an institutional mechanism or system was not in place to coordinate relief operations. Owing to the increasing frequency and intensity of disaster events in the country during the past two decades, it has increasingly become evident that these occurrences should no longer be considered as emergencies because they are quite predictable. Additionally,

experience has clearly shown that ‘single-dose’ interventions usually planned in an emergency have failed to produce lasting solutions to these problems. This situation is compounded by the ever-increasing list of hazards, of which some have occurred as direct or indirect impacts of climate change.

The absence of a comprehensive strategy has thus resulted in a delayed response, in addition to the huge socioeconomic and environmental losses arising from disasters. It has been recognized that these impacts could be significantly minimized if a proactive strategy were developed and implemented. This situation has given rise to the need to change the mindset from a mere emergency response to taking account of disasters as part of the development planning process – in other words, the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction in development planning at all levels.

To this end, the Government of Malawi has received support from the agencies of the United Nations system, from the donor community and from civil society organizations in its efforts to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development planning, plans and budgets. First, the United Nations will make a special contribution to the achievement of Malawi’s growth and development objectives. The United Nations will make this contribution by supporting specific areas in which it feels it has a comparative advantage and extensive experience to make the most significant impact on the national economy. The Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations will provide the basis of its strategic positioning and support for the national development plans of Malawi. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) sets out how the UN will support these national development plans. UNDAF is thus the programmatic response of the United Nations system to the development needs and priorities of Malawi. The central purpose of UNDAF is to help Malawi

achieve the Millennium Development Goals as locally articulated through the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, which is the overarching medium-term operational strategy for the country. Hence, UNDAF has to align itself with the main objective of the Government of Malawi, which is to promote economic growth as a means to reduce poverty, aid dependency and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Second, several donors in Malawi, either acting individually or via partnerships with other donor agencies, have in recent years scaled up their financial and technical support for DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA) initiatives in the country, thereby providing the Government of Malawi with the opportunity to effectively mainstream DRR into the development process. Third, this study has revealed that civil society organizations are strategic stakeholders with a pivotal responsibility to complement government efforts of integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into community-based development strategies within the framework of national development strategies, plans and programmes. In fact, most donors prefer implementing their actions by supporting civil society organizations, which are the most active players in disaster risk reduction—mainly at the district level. They operate both as individual organizations and in partnership with others through consortiums, a pattern that has significantly increased in the past decade. This situation has a twofold benefit: conflict is reduced at the operational level, and partnerships mean there is less competition for resources from the same donors.

However, effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development planning at all levels is affected by the fact that, despite many years of lobbying the government of Malawi for a budget line for DRR actions, a budget line still remains outstanding in the national budget. As a result, many actions identified as disaster risk reduction in the

district councils, for example, are implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with government ministries and departments only playing the role of partners.

Main tools and approaches used to mainstream and implement disaster risk reduction activities

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), to which Malawi is a signatory, is guided mainly by DRR mainstreaming. The HFA is also used to monitor the extent of DRR mainstreaming in the country using the 'HFA Monitor' tool. It should be pointed out that different tools are used in the country for mainstreaming DRR.

First, from the Government's side, DRR mainstreaming will be led by the draft National Disaster Risk Management (NDRM) policy, which is based on the Hyogo Framework's priority action areas. Effective implementation of DRR initiatives at all levels will require the capacity development of institutions and staff, and appropriate resource allocation. This is why the Department of Disaster Management Affairs has stationed staff in 14 out of 28 districts to ensure the further integration of DRM principles. This representation of staff at district level also ensures the effective mainstreaming of DRR in individual projects funded by the Government's own sources and by external resources. This step is important, as it will ensure that projects' outcomes will lead to more resilient communities and to a reduction in disaster risks. Furthermore, to make better use of knowledge, education and innovations in order to promote a culture of safety and the adoption of interventions that enhance resilience, including strengthened capacity for effective response and recovery from disasters at all levels, a forum was organized where DRM and climate change presentations were shared and published. Additionally, all early warning systems-related project proposals since 2010 are geared towards putting in place an effective system to identify, assess and moni-

tor national and cross-border risks, resulting in a people-centred early warning system being strengthened at both national and local levels. The tools and mechanisms for incorporating risk reduction preparedness and response and recovery programmes are being adopted and developed by Government in partnership with stakeholders. People and institutions are being made aware of and motivated to participate in actions aimed at reducing risks. To develop essential skills and knowledge to integrate and manage disaster risk reduction, the Government will actively participate in educational curricula reviews and their development at all levels. Lastly, just to mention a few instruments and mechanisms for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction, the National Disaster Preparedness Relief Technical Committee, which is composed of designated senior representatives who are formally appointed to serve on the Committee as the disaster risk management focal points for their government line ministries and departments, civil society organisations, scientific and academic institutions, the private sector, the agencies of the United Nations system, the donor community and the media, constitutes a key tool. In other words, through the multi-stakeholder membership drawn from various relevant agencies, the Committee serves as the main mechanism through which disaster risk reduction is mainstreamed into these agencies and at all levels in the country. The Committee was formalized as the DRM platform and launched in early 2013. The DRM platform thus serves as a major link between policy and practice. For example, NGO consortiums, through their participation in this platform, are able to share field-level experiences with policymakers.

Global recognition of the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into development agendas has been increasing since the late 1990s. The HFA framework developed in 2005 was a turning point for global efforts towards internationally coordinated

DRR-related work. It is a useful reference tool in planning for DRR and CCA integration into disaster management and development programmes at any level. It urges Governments and development stakeholders to give higher priority to risk-reducing actions. Since its inception in 2005, the HFA has been a key guiding instrument for Governments and strategic stakeholders such as civil society organizations to make progress in the process of DRR mainstreaming. It is therefore expedient that DRR practitioners and stakeholders understand the HFA thoroughly in order to be effective in the planning and implementation of DRR mainstreaming measures at different levels, most especially at community level.

In addition, over the years tools have been developed to help development agencies to systematically and intentionally institutionalize the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development work. Despite the diversity of approaches and tools used by civil society organizations, the review has established that all the organizations consulted conduct participatory community vulnerability assessments in their target communities prior to implementing any DRR activities. The main objective of these *ex-ante* assessments is to identify the main hazards to which communities are exposed and to measure their level of vulnerability to the identified hazards. For all the organizations consulted, the assessments culminate into an action-planning process where communities determine what needs to be done to address the hazards and vulnerabilities identified.

Good practices, success factors and lessons learned

The study identified several good practices, success factors and lessons learned in mainstreaming DRR and CCA measures in Malawi. However, in view of the fact that most DRR mainstreaming actions are implemented by civil society organizations, the good practices described in this report have mainly been derived from their work. The

assessment was guided by the assumption that mainstreaming and implementing DRR measures constitute a process and are not just one-off activities. The HFA framework and the Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community document therefore provided good reference points to measure success in the effort towards mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into humanitarian and development programmes. Indicators measuring progress on the HFA provide a means to track progress on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and on implementing the Hyogo Framework. Different elements of resilience help to characterize a disaster-resilient community. The HFA also provides some ideas about how to progress towards integrating disaster risk reduction into policies and development planning. The guidance note has five thematic clusters based on the five priority areas of the HFA. These frameworks provide a benchmark towards achieving the HFA.

Good practices and success factors were identified and analysed with reference to the indicators measuring progress on the HFA and to the Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community document. If the HFA is used as yardstick for achieving DRR mainstreaming, it will be easy to identify good practices because interventions designed to contribute to the achievement of the indicators can be considered as good practices. The latter, as well as success factors and lessons learned in mainstreaming and implementing DRR interventions, are discussed in the report.

Recommendations

In the view of, among others, the good practices, lessons learnt and challenges or factors restraining effective DRR mainstreaming into development frameworks in Malawi, the following measures are recommended:

- a) The Department of Disaster Management Affairs should urgently follow up and ensure that an e-draft DRR policy document is chan-

- nelled and approved by all relevant levels of Government so that it can become effective and operationalized to enhance DRR mainstreaming and coordination.
- b) Following the approval by the Office of the President and Cabinet for the DRR budget line to be incorporated in the national budget, the Department should ensure that budget lines for disaster risk reduction are incorporated in all relevant ministries and departments including towns. This is an opportunity to implement the DRR plans that have been supported only by donors to date.
 - c) Planning and budgeting capacity of all DRR focal points should be strengthened to enable them to identify, prioritize and develop budgets for DRR interventions. This should be accompanied by the development of guidelines for DRR mainstreaming and budgeting at both sector and local government levels.
 - d) Baseline studies and assessments should be carried to establish benchmarks including gaps in and priorities for mainstreaming DRR in both key and high-risk social, economic and environmental sectors.

1. Introduction

Globally, there is convincing evidence that the number and magnitude of weather-related disasters are increasing, and that poor countries and poor communities are affected disproportionately. The recorded number of disasters, the number of communities and people they affect and the property losses they cause have risen dramatically each decade since reliable records began in 1960. In Africa, just as in Malawi, drought and floods are the principal weather-related hazards that trigger devastating disasters. These hazards are predicted to increase with climate change and further worsen the incidence of associated disasters in the region.

Disasters strongly affect development patterns in afflicted countries through the loss of lives, the damage caused to physical, natural and environmental assets, the losses in human and financial wealth, and the erosion of social capital and governance systems. In 2008, 96 disasters were recorded in sub-Saharan Africa. They included 44 floods and nine droughts that affected 16.3 million people. The resultant economic losses incurred were estimated at \$1 billion.

Despite the significant impact of natural disasters on Africa's core development sectors (e.g. agriculture, energy, health, infrastructure, education and environment), DRR measures continue to be inadequately integrated into and poorly implemented within the framework of development policies and strategies at various levels in the region. As a consequence, every disaster event results in enormous setbacks for national sustainable development initiatives and progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Hence, the need to effectively integrate DRR into develop-

ment policies and strategies, as well as into disaster management programmes, cannot be overstated if poor people living in disaster-prone areas in poor countries are to embark on sustainable disaster-resilient programmes or else they will continue to suffer considerably from the adverse impact of weather-related hazards.

This study therefore took stock of the status of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development frameworks in Malawi. The assessment included the role of the agencies of the United Nations system, the donor community and the experiences of civil society organizations in enhancing the mainstreaming and implementation of DRR measures in Malawi. The study assesses the conceptualization of DRR mainstreaming and implementation approaches, identifies emerging good practices and learning opportunities and recommends possible strategies for the effective scaling-up of DRR mainstreaming and implementation measures in the country.

1.1 Background

This assessment report on mainstreaming and implementing disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures in Malawi was prepared within the framework of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in national and regional development strategies in support of both efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals and the attainment of sustainable development goals in Africa. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) jointly conceived the project.

Key partners in project implementation included SADC, the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

This report presents findings on the assessment of the progress and experiences in mainstreaming the planning and implementation of DRR measures as part of national development strategies, plans and programmes in Malawi. The assessment was commissioned jointly by the secretariat of SADC, ECA and UNISDR.

This report provided input into preparing the sub-regional assessment report. It also served as a key resource for the subregional DRR capacity development workshop, which among others showcased and promoted good practices to scale up the mainstreaming and implementation of DRR measures as part of development frameworks. In addition, the findings in the report were disseminated at the pre-event on “Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming and Investment for Resilient Structural Transformation in Africa”, which was held in May 2014. ECA and UNDP jointly organized the event, which was held in the lead up to the Fifth Africa Regional Platform on disaster risk reduction.

1.2 Methodology

This study was guided by well-formulated terms of reference. The assessment was carried out using both a quantitative and a qualitative approach. It was also guided as far as possible by existing frameworks such as the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015, the African Union Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and the DRR Mainstreaming Framework. Specifically, the study was carried out as follows:

1.2.1 Desk Study

An extensive desk review was undertaken to collect data relevant to the assignment. In this respect, the following were reviewed: national, sectoral and city DRR strategies and frameworks; national, sectoral and local development strategies, plans and programmes including poverty reduction strategies; and cooperation frameworks including the Common Country Assessment-UN Development Assistance Framework. The complete list of documents that were reviewed is included under References.

1.2.2 Review of national adaptation programme of action and other adaptation frameworks

This phase involved the review of the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) and other national and local CCA frameworks, including the following:

- Draft NDRM policy for Malawi
- Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991)
- National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework (2010 – 2015)
- Operational Guidelines for Disaster Risk Management
- Draft National Climate Change Policy for Malawi
- National Climate Programme Document

This list is also included under References.

1.2.3 Key informant interviews

This stage involved conducting consultations with selected institutions and people at both national and decentralized levels to gather in a timely manner relevant and up-to-date data and information on disaster risk reduction, with a particular emphasis on the extent of integration and implementation of DRR interventions, the tools and approaches used, and the best practices and lessons learned in this regard. For most of the consultations at decentralized levels, tailor-made

checklists were prepared and sent to key officers to complete and return. The names of people who provided some feedback at these levels are provided as an annex to this report. Similarly, the full list of other key informants consulted and the organizations they represent are also annexed.

1.2.4 Guiding frameworks used in the assessment

This assessment was guided by the following frameworks on disaster risk reduction and mainstreaming into development processes.

- The DRR Cycle
- The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015
- DRR Mainstreaming Framework²
- The Africa Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction

Annex 2 provides a brief summary of each of these frameworks.

1.2.5 Data analysis and synthesis of information

Data analysis involved, among other things, assessing trends in disaster occurrence and their related impacts. Charts, tables and graphs where appropriate were therefore used for this purpose. This was complemented by a synthesis of information where summary matrices were used to simplify the presentation of the findings. The draft report was prepared on the basis of these results and submitted for peer review. The draft report was then finalized after incorporating the comments and inputs provided by key stakeholders, including those at the subregional capacity-building workshop on DRR mainstreaming and implementation for the Southern Africa subregion, which was held in November 2013.

1.3 Structure of the report

This report presents the findings of the study carried out in Malawi between July and September 2013. It assesses the conceptualization of DRR mainstreaming and implementation approaches, identifies emerging good practices and learning opportunities and recommends possible strategies for the effective scaling-up of DRR mainstreaming and implementation measures in the country. The report is structured as follows and has four major chapters.

Chapter 1 presents the introduction, background and objectives, as well as the main tasks carried out in the context of the study. The chapter also outlines the methodological approaches, including the main conceptual frameworks used to assess DRR mainstreaming in Malawi. Chapter 2 presents the principal hazards and disasters and their occurrence and impact in Malawi. It highlights the distribution and trends in hazard and disaster occurrence and their social and economic impacts in the country. Chapter 3 provides an analysis of past, ongoing and planned DRR interventions in Malawi. Chapter 4 provides an assessment of the extent of mainstreaming and implementation of DRR and CCA interventions in the context of development, while also presenting good practices, success factors and lessons learned through DRR mainstreaming and implementation in Malawi. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and recommendations.

2 ECHO/UNDP/NEDA (2008): Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in subnational development land use/physical planning in the Philippines. Guidelines

2. Main hazards, disaster occurrences and impacts in Malawi

Malawi has a population of over 15 million people, of which over 80 percent are based in the rural areas and depend on subsistence farming as their main source of livelihood. Agriculture contributes over 35 percent to the country's GDP. Agricultural exports make up over 70 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings, with tobacco accounting for approximately 65 percent of Malawi's export earnings. Due to overreliance on rain-fed agriculture, people's livelihoods and the economy as a whole are very vulnerable to droughts and floods, the most frequently occurring natural hazards in Malawi (NSO, 2009).

Malawi is exposed to a number of natural and human-induced hazards. While most of the hazards can affect all 28 districts of the country, there are certain districts that are more prone than others. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs has classified 15 out of 28 districts in Malawi as disaster-prone on the basis of historical data and the local climate. The 2011 Climate Change Vulnerability Index released by the British risk analysis firm Maplecroft ranks Malawi 15 out of 16 countries with 'extreme risks' to climate change impacts in the world. Malawi is one of only 4 African countries in this category. Floods, dry spells, droughts, storms, hailstorms, road accidents, fire and disease outbreaks are the most common hazards to which the country is exposed. Table 1 presents a summary of the most common hazards in Malawi and their geographical distribution.

2.1 Trends in the Occurrence of Main Disasters

Malawi's national disaster profile, which dates back to 1946, has a record of more than 600 disaster events occurring in all 28 districts of the country. Table 2 provides a summary of the most common disasters recorded.

Table 2: Number of disaster events as recorded in the national profile for disasters, 1946-2013

Disaster	Number of recorded events
Floods:	279
Droughts:	30
Strong winds/storms:	164
Hailstorms:	52
Fires:	9
Epidemics:	39
Accidents:	10
Earthquakes:	3

Source: Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), National Profile for Disasters, 1946-2013

The most common hazards are all weather-related, with floods and droughts being the key hazards because they affect agriculture, the backbone of the country's economy. Rainfall in Malawi is usually the result of the combined effect of the inter-tropical convergence zone and the creation of a slow-moving low-pressure belt, which may also be induced by cyclones passing through the Mozambique Channel or entering it from the southwest Indian Ocean. The inter-annual rainfall variations are attributed to the Indian Ocean's sea surface temperatures induced by the El Niño-

Table 1: Common hazards and localities in Malawi

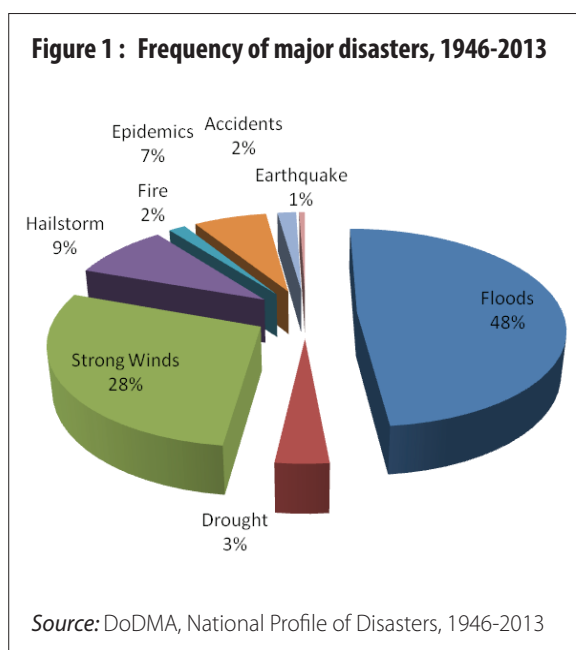
Hazard category	Hazard	Geographical district
Water- and weather-related	Floods	Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe, Machinga, Zomba, Mangochi, Balaka, Blantyre, Salima, Nkhatakota, Ntcheu, Dedza, Nkhata Bay, Karonga, Rumphu, Mzimba
	Droughts and dry spells	Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe, Mulanje, Mwanza, Neno, Balaka, Zomba, Salima, Karonga, Mzimba (Also, possible spillover effect into other districts.)
	Strong winds and storms	Chikwawa, Nsanje, Dedza, Rumphu, Karonga, Nkhatakota, Salima, Mangochi. (May be more intense in some areas than others).
	Hailstorms	Dowa, Ntchisi, Chikwawa, Nsanje, Salima, Dedza, Rumphu, Karonga, Chitipa, Mchinji, Lilongwe
	Electrical storms and lightning	Dowa, Mulanje, Mzimba, Chitipa, Ntchisi, Blantyre, Dedza
Accidents	Transport accidents	Dedza, Ntcheu, Blantyre, Mzuzu, Karonga, Lilongwe, Zomba, Rumphu, Chikwawa, Mzimba
	Industrial accidents	Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mulanje, Thyolo, Mzuzu, Nkhatakota, Chikwawa, Karonga, Kasungu
	Fires	Mzuzu, Mzimba, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba, Karonga, Dedza, Mulanje, Thyolo, Chikwawa, Nsanje, Kasungu
Geological and environmental	Landslides	Karonga, Rumphu, Phalombe, Blantyre, Zomba, Mulanje, Dedza, Chitipa
	Earthquakes	All districts
	Pollution	Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba, Mzuzu, Rumphu, Nkhatakota, Chikwawa, Kasungu, Mulanje, Thyolo, Karonga
Disease outbreaks and pest infestations	Human disease (cholera, measles, typhoid)	Lilongwe, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Nsanje, Karonga, Nkhata Bay, Salima, Nkhatakota, Machinga, Mangochi, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Phalombe
	HIV and AIDS	All districts
	Animal disease (foot and mouth, swine fever, Newcastle)	Chikwawa, Nsanje, Karonga, Phalombe, Salima
	Plant disease (cassava mosaic, leaf spots)	Nkhatakota, Nkhata Bay
	Plant Pests (weevils, army worms, locusts, stalk borer)	Karonga, Chikwawa, Salima
	Human and animal pests (fleas, ticks, bugs, lice)	All districts
Civil strife	Election violence	Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba, Karonga, Machinga, Mangochi
	Refugees and illegal immigrants	Dowa, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba, Mzuzu, Karonga, Chitipa, Mchinji, Nkhatabay, Nsanje, Mulanje, Mwanza, Machinga, Ntcheu, Dedza
	Violent demonstrations and rioting	All districts
Economic disturbances	Market failure	All districts
	Withdrawal of foreign aid and investment	All districts

Source: Government of Malawi (GoM) Disaster Risk Management Handbook(2013)

southern oscillation, causing floods in some areas and dry spells in others. For Malawi, La Niña years are usually associated with more rainfall and flooding while El Niño is characterized by a rainfall deficit and dry spells (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs, 2002; McSweeney and others, 2008). Predicting drought in Malawi remains a challenging task. Not all droughts have been a result of El Niño, and some years such as 1997/98 experienced normal rainfall despite it being an El Niño year. Some droughts such as that of 1958/59, 1959/60 and 1967/68 occurred when sea surface temperatures in the eastern-central equatorial Pacific Ocean were neutral (Munthali et al, 2003). The location of the country along a tectonically active boundary between two major African plates within the great East African Rift System exposes the whole country to earthquake and landslide risks. Storms and strong winds have been associated with tropical cyclones and most of the devastating strong winds and storms have been accompanied by rains that have at times led to flooding. Human disease risks range from conditions like schistosomiasis, measles, malaria, cholera, HIV and AIDS.

As can be seen from Figure 1, which is a summary of the recorded disasters that have occurred between 1946 and 2013, floods are the most common hazard in Malawi.

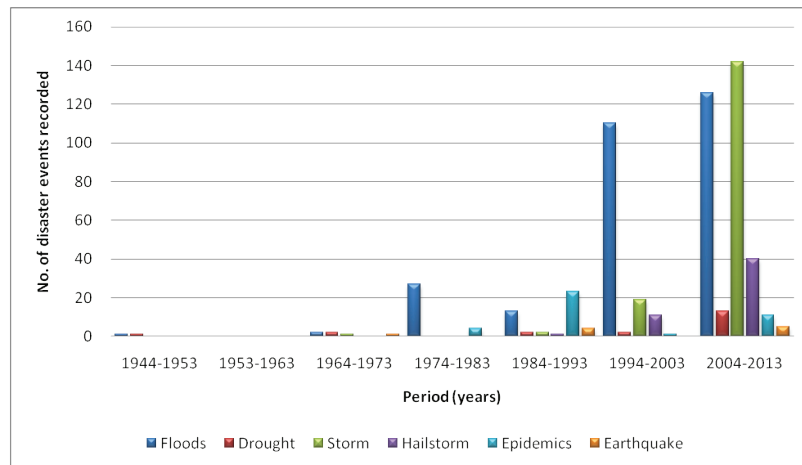
Most of the flooding in Malawi results from heavy rainfall that creates excessive runoff in water bodies, leading to inundation and swelling of flood plains. The risk of flooding is further increased by human activities such as cultivation along riverbanks and deforestation in these catchment areas. The southern part of Malawi is particularly more prone to flooding, with the Lower Shire Valley being particularly susceptible but also the lakeshore areas of Lakes Malawi, Chilwa and Malombe. Flooding in the Zambezi Valley in Mozambique, combined with high flows in the Ruo River and the slow flows of the Shire River, has often resulted



in flooding in the Lower Shire and Ruo valley flood plains. While floods previously used to occur every four years in the Lower Shire Valley, recently they have been occurring almost every year. A number of rivers in the southern region such as the Shire, Likangala, Thondwe, Phalombe, Namandanje and Domasi commonly flood, as areas in the central region are low-lying, with rivers such as the Bwanje and Livulezi in Ntcheu, Nadzipulu and Livulezi in Dedza, Linthipe, Lifidzi and Lipimbi in Salima and Kaombe in Nkhotakota. In the northern region, Karonga is the most flood-prone district, with the Songwe, North Rukuru, Kibwe, Kasisi, Nyungwe, Wayi, Lufirya and Kyungu being the rivers that commonly flood, although Rumphu and Nkhata Bay districts also experience flooding. Malawi has also experienced flash floods in smaller streams and overland during periods of high intense rainfall, at times owing to poor drainage systems.

However, since disaster records have only been comprehensive for the past decade, the picture might be distorted owing to the lack of data for the other years. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs was only established in 1991. According to current information available, the number of disaster events has been increasing since 1974, with the period 2004-2013 record-

Figure 2: Trends in disaster occurrence, 1944-2013



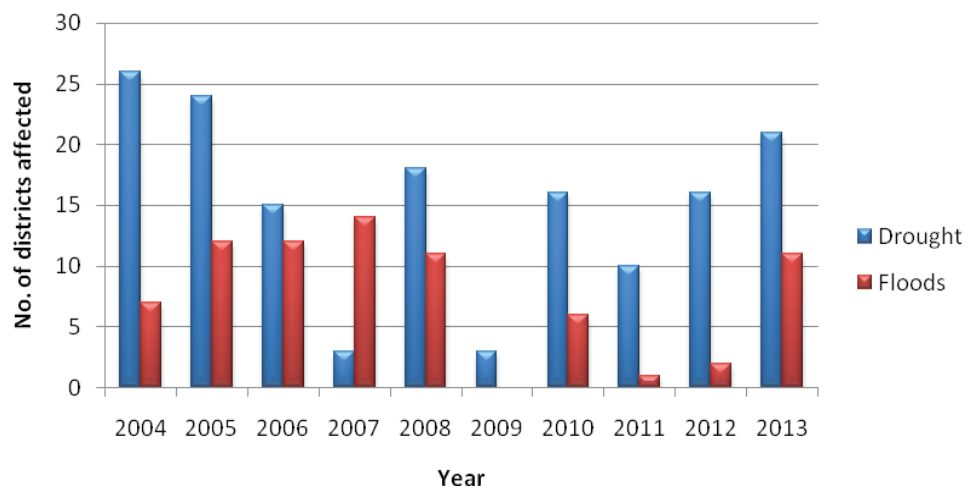
Source: DoDMA, National Profile of Disasters

ing the highest number of disasters. Some of the severe flood disasters experienced in Malawi occurred in Zomba in 1946, Lower Shire Valley in 1956 and 1989, Nkhata Bay in 1957, Phalombe in 1991, Karonga in 2001, Nsanje in 2012 and recently in Karonga, Nkhatabay, Chikwawa, Zomba, Mangochi and Phalombe in 2013 (Nilsson et al., 2010; DoDMA, 2013). Despite a number of disease outbreaks, very few have been recorded over the previous decade. The highest number of storms

was recorded in the previous two decades, 110 cases between 1994 and 2003 and 126 cases between 2004 and 2013. The country has also witnessed three major earthquakes in Karonga (1966), Salima (1989) with tremors in Dedza, Mchinji, Kasungu and Dedza and in Karonga (2009) with tremors in Chitipa and other districts.

Food insecurity has also been a major challenge in Malawi over the years, with an uptrend cur-

Figure 3: comparison of the number of districts affected by floods and droughts, 2004-2013



Source: DoDMA, National Profile of Disasters

rently indicated. Malawi suffered severe droughts in 1903, 1922, 1948/49 and 1991/92 and serious droughts in 1967/68, 1972/73, 1982/83 and 1994/95, 1997/98, 2001/02 and 2004/05. Some districts were also hit by localized droughts. For instance, Salima district experienced localized droughts in 1953/54, 1980/81, 1981/82, 1991/92 and 1994/95. Karonga district in the north also suffered localized drought during 1948/49, 1952/53, 1953/54, 1964/65, 1981/82, 1982/83, 1991/92, 1999/2000 and 2002/2003 (Clay, 2003; Munthali and others, 2003; Bryceson and Fonseca, 2006). However, unlike floods and other disasters where a single event in an area is recorded as a disaster, since 2004 the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) has collected data on droughts at both national and district levels. This means that even if 20 districts were affected in any one year, this phenomenon would be recorded as a single drought event. Geographically, droughts have affected more people and more districts than floods. Figure 3 compares trends in terms of the number of districts affected by droughts (food insecurity) against the number of districts affected by floods from 2004 and 2013. However, food insecurity in Malawi has usually not been attributable solely to drought but has resulted from a multiplicity of factors, including late onset rains, early cessation and erratic rains, prolonged dry spells, floods and economic challenges. Due to the regional differences in rainfall patterns, some parts of the country can experience drought even during years of good rains. In some cases, areas prone to floods are also susceptible to dry spells, droughts and storms.

2.2 Impact of major disasters

Recurrent disasters in Malawi have had far-reaching impacts on food, energy, health, water and other sectors of the economy. Direct losses related to disasters in Malawi have included physical damage to assets comprising buildings, infra-

structure, industrial plants, standing crops, grain stores, livestock and social infrastructure, and loss of human life and injury. Secondary losses related to disasters have included an impact on GDP, fiscal performance, increased poverty levels and HIV infection.

2.2.1 Loss of life and property

Disasters in Malawi have largely resulted in loss and damage to assets, especially to houses, household property and crops. Between 1979 and 2008, cumulatively 21.7 million people were affected by natural disasters with 2,596 deaths recorded (World Bank, 2011). The deadliest flood in March 1991 in southern Malawi was the result of a major rock avalanche, killing about 500 people. Storms have often destroyed houses owing to poor construction, with roofs commonly being blown off. As this situation is usually accompanied by rains, household property is lost, with foodstuffs being the most badly affected.

2.2.2 Impact on food and livelihood security

While floods have affected around two million people from 1979 to date, more than 14 million people have been affected by droughts (food insecurity) between 2003 and 2013, representing an annual average of 10 per cent of the total population. Table 3 shows the trend in the number of households identified by MVAC as missing their food entitlements between 2004 and 2013. Disasters such as floods and storms have had far-reaching impacts on the lives and livelihoods of communities, causing loss of life and severe damage to roads, bridges, settlements, farms and gardens. A bridge that was washed away more than two decades ago in Nsanje district has not been repaired to date, making travel for community members to the district headquarters and other areas a challenge during rainy seasons. A total of 8,439 hectares of crops was destroyed following floods in three districts in 2013. The affected areas were among the 21 districts identified by MVAC

as having faced food insecurity in 2013. Changing settlement patterns, high population growth, increasing levels of poverty and economic development are exposing more people to disasters. Traditionally, schools have been badly hit as a result of disasters such as floods since affected households have used them as safe havens, thereby impairing the learning process.

Table 3: Number of food-insecure people, 2004-2013

Year	Population Affected
2004	1,343,640
2005	4,497,800
2006	833,000
2007	323,900
2008	1,490,200
2009	147,492
2010	1,968,688
2011	201,854
2012	1,972,993
2013	1,461,940

Source: GoM/MVAC annual reports

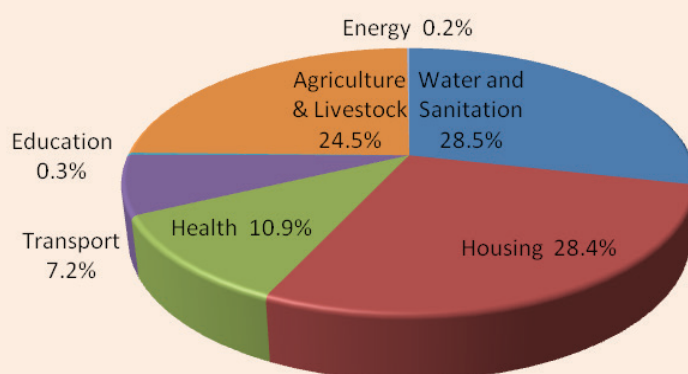
Box 1: Cost of floods: Case of post-damage and needs assessment in Nsanje

Nsanje district lies at the southern tip of Malawi and borders Chikwawa, Thyolo and Mozambique. It is one of the most flood-prone districts in the country. In January 2012, the swelling of the Rivers Ruo and Shire following heavy rains that fell on 7 January 2012 and 22 January 2012 led to serious flooding of Traditional Authority Mlolo. About 10,376 people (2,887 households) accounting for 4 per cent of the district's population were affected, with 6,159 displaced as a result of damage to homes. After the response period, the Government, with the support of the World Bank and UNDP, conducted a multi-stakeholder post-damage and needs assessment (PDNA) exercise in the district. This post-damage and needs assessment was the first comprehensive one of its kind in Malawi that was conducted in recent times and that covered different sectors.

2.2.3 Costs associated with selected disasters

As a largely rural-based, landlocked country lacking mineral resources, Malawi's economy largely depends on agricultural exports, especially tea and tobacco (Bryceson, 2006). About 90 per cent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihood, with maize (largely rain-fed and susceptible to rainfall variability) being the major

Figure 4: Damage and loss distribution by sector



Source: GoM, Nsanje PDNA Report, 2012

The cost of the relief assistance provided by various stakeholders was estimated at \$946,212. Water and sanitation facilities were the most affected, with related environmental impacts. There was a 40 per cent reduction in fish caught in the months just after the flooding, though it peaked subsequently; an estimated 46 hectares of forest was destroyed by the displaced who cut trees for settlements, firewood and charcoal production; 58 crocodiles were killed to protect farmers and households from attacks; 43 hectares of fertile dambo land was covered by sand and rendered unproductive; 2,649 latrines, mostly shallow, were destroyed which led to pollution, and 32 boreholes and 22 shallow wells were affected. A total of 1,384 houses were completely damaged, 1,503 houses were partially damaged and 3,574 hectares of crops (maize, sorghum, millet and cotton) were inundated and rendered unproductive. Health impacts included the disruption of health services due to the inundation of health facilities, although the health facilities were undamaged. In addition, related economic losses were incurred in the form of loss of income for traders and loss of revenue for landlords whose houses were destroyed. The total cost of the disaster, which affected only 4 per cent of the district's population, was estimated at \$13.5 million.

food crop grown on 90 per cent of land under cultivation and tobacco as the main cash crop. About 75 per cent of the labour force in Malawi is employed in the agricultural sector, and agriculture contributes more than 40 per cent to the country's GDP (NSO, 2005). Disasters such as floods and droughts therefore have a considerable impact on the economy, as past events have shown that Malawi's economy is highly prone to major disasters such as drought.

a) Economic costs and impact at the local level

There is at present no systematic effort to conduct post-disaster needs assessments that would provide detailed data on economic, social and environmental loss resulting from disasters. Usually, when disasters occur, only initial impact assessments to determine immediate response needs are conducted. Where post-disaster assessments are conducted, they are usually not comprehensive enough and only done for a specific sector, such as damage and cost of recovery for schools, roads or water points. However, some microlevel post-disaster needs assessments have shown considerable losses resulting from disasters at

the local level. A disaster impact assessment on the floods that occurred in Nsanje district in 2012, which affected 2,887 households or just 4 per cent of the district's population, shows that the cost of the damage and loss was \$2.9 million and that recovery and reconstruction would cost \$7.3 million, while mitigation needs would require \$1.5 million. The 6.2 magnitude earthquake that occurred in Karonga district in 2009 in the northern part of Malawi affected around 54 per cent of the district's population, 4,010 houses had fallen walls, 221 houses totally collapsed, 6,561 houses developed serious cracks and were to be demolished. A total of 102 government schools experienced damage of various kinds, requiring 190 two-classroom school blocks to be built, 110 two-classroom blocks to be retrofitted, 382 staff houses to be constructed and 28 staff houses to be retrofitted at an estimated total cost of \$21.2 million. The case below illustrates the huge cost of even a small localized disaster.

b) Economic losses and impact at the macroeconomic level

MVAC estimated the cost of 10 food insecurity events between 2004 and 2013 at about MK30

Table 4: Estimated cost of the 2012 floods in Nsanje

Sector	Cost estimates by type (US\$)			
	Damages & Losses	Recovery & Reconstruction	DRR	Total Cost by Sector
Water and sanitation	840,916	793,090.91	796,363.64	2,430,370.55
Housing	835,715	5,468,483.64	75,890.91	6,380,089.55
Health	322,505	98,181.82	358,181.82	778,868.64
Transport	212,436	1,696,727.27	4,618.18	1,913,781.45
Education	8,124	2,327.27	261,818.18	272,269.45
Agriculture and live-stock	722,173	796,363.64	14,545.45	1,533,082.09
Energy	4,517	133,272.73	9,090.91	146,880.64
Total	2,946,386	8,988,447.28	1,520,509.09	13,455,342.37

Source: Government of Malawi, Nsanje PDNA Report, 2012

billion (\$93 million at present value) in terms of maize requirement alone. However, this figure has usually been an underestimation when compared to the actual cost of the response due to, among other reasons, estimating the costs at the maize equivalent only without factoring in other food entitlements and operational costs. For instance, excluding other parallel response programmes, the actual cost of the government-led component of the 2012/2013 food insecurity response, which was estimated to cost around \$22 million in maize equivalence, was around \$66 million. Average annual GDP loss from drought is estimated at 1 per cent, while for floods it is 0.7 per cent, with an estimated rise in poverty of 2 per cent as a result of floods in southern Malawi (Pauw and others, 2010). The 1991-92 drought affected more than 6 million people, triggering a 60 per cent and 25 per cent decline in maize production and the agricultural sector production respectively, with an equivalent drop in GDP of 10 per cent. The 1994 drought resulted in a yield reduction of 33 per cent, a decline in agricultural GDP of 29 per cent and a national drop in GDP of 11.6 per cent. Inflation rose from 12.5 per cent in 1990-91 to 36 per cent in 1992-93, stood at 66 per cent in 1993-94 and 75 per cent in 1994-95. There was a 9 per cent decline in revenue in 1992-93 and 11 per cent in 1993-94. Apart from the political and governance issues, the drought of 1991-1992 and 1994-95 greatly contributed to the volatile socioeconomic quagmire that Malawi found itself during the period. In 1948-49 and 1991-92, droughts affected hydroelectric power due to the lowering of water levels that generated electricity with serious impacts on industries, economy and livelihoods (Clay and others, 2003; Munthali

and others, 2003). Malawi drought models show that a severe drought like that of 1991-1992, occurring once in 25 years, would lead to a 10 per cent decline in GDP. Crop pests and diseases have also often given rise to crop failure with resulting food insecurity. Diseases have had negative economic effects that have stifled development, with the worst-case potential of crippling the country.

c) Environmental damage

There are very limited data available on the environmental impacts associated with disasters. Despite the obvious impacts, disaster assessments in the country have rarely analysed disaster impacts on the environment, apart from loss of crop production. Natural disasters have led to not just crop losses but also to general biodiversity losses. Cases of deforestation are also high in areas where camps have been created, where trees are used for firewood, charcoal production and settlements.

It should however be noted that environmental data are not systematically collected and profiled to inform the analysis on the impacts of disasters on the environment. Nevertheless, besides direct impacts of floods, for example, on forest cover and loss of biodiversity, flooding if not properly managed is usually followed in the affected areas by cholera cases and other water-borne diseases such as dysentery. As a result, in recent years through support from UNICEF and other donors, the Ministry of Health usually steps up cholera surveillance and preparedness activities with affected populations in flood-prone areas of the country.

3. Analysis of past, ongoing and planned disaster risk reduction interventions

3.1 Background to disaster risk reduction in Malawi

Malawi like any other country in the Great African Rift Valley is exposed to many types of disasters. The increasing impacts of these disasters on life, livelihoods, and economic and environmental assets continue to pose a significant threat to the nation's ability to develop sustainably and escape poverty³. Among poor countries, Malawi was identified as one of the most affected, according to a World Bank Report on the Situation Analysis of Disaster Risk Management and Practices (Hay and Phiri, 2008). One of the factors contributing to this impact is the lack of effective disaster risk reduction efforts. Disasters arise from a combination of natural hazards, conditions of vulnerability, and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce or cope with potential negative consequences. Disasters disrupt people's livelihoods, endanger human and food security, damage infrastructure and hinder socioeconomic growth and development. Disasters also increase the poverty of rural and urban households, erode the ability of the national economy to invest in key social sectors that are key to reducing poverty, and undermine the efforts the economy is making towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals through the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS).

In response, the Government of Malawi has in recent years recognized that disasters are a key factor hindering Malawi's growth and poverty reduction efforts, as spelled out in the Strategy. Disaster risk management, which is a combination of disaster risk reduction and disaster management concepts, has therefore been adopted as one of the core components in the Strategy, whose long-term goal vis-à-vis disaster management is to reduce the socioeconomic impact of disasters and to build a strong disaster management mechanism. The MGDS therefore provides strategic direction to disaster risk management in the country.

In pursuance of this DRR strategy, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in Malawi has in the past decade not only advocated a paradigm shift from a reactive to a more proactive approach, it has put in place institutional mechanisms and developed policies and strategies for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction at all levels in the country.

3.1.1 Legislative, policy and strategic frameworks for disaster risk reduction in Malawi

The Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991) is the foundation of the benchmark for disaster risk reduction in Malawi. Ideally, this Act and the MGDS will provide strategic direction to disaster risk management for the country. Additionally, as

3 Government of Malawi (2012): Functional Review Report on the Department of Disaster Management Affairs.

pointed out already, Malawi endorsed the HFA in 2005, which provides for a systematic and strategic approach to the reduction of vulnerability⁴ and the risk⁵of disasters⁶.

In the application of these frameworks for implementing various initiatives aimed at reducing people's vulnerabilities, several lessons were learnt which have informed the necessity and establishment of additional legislative, policy and strategic frameworks in the country. These developments are summarized in the sections that follow.

a) Incorporation of disaster risk reduction in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy

The incorporation of DRR strategies and initiatives into the Strategy since 2006 was based on the recognition that, despite the fact that the Government had developed an array of sectoral policies and strategies including the MGDS, disaster risk considerations remained inadequately addressed in those policies and plans. And yet, different studies clearly demonstrated the impacts of disasters on vulnerable people and the economy at large. The Government thus recognized that it would not succeed in its efforts to ensure sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction without taking a proactive approach to addressing the underlying problems of disaster risks. Since the MGDS 1 (2006 – 2011), this overarching medium-term economic development strategy

for Malawi has therefore incorporated disaster risk management under theme 2 of the strategy document. Accordingly, it is clearly stated in the Strategy that:

“The main aim is to reduce the socioeconomic impact of disasters and to build a strong disaster management mechanism. The key strategy is to enhance disaster management, planning and response. Among other things, efforts will be made to promote the integration of disaster risk management into sustainable development planning and programming at all levels”.

The government continues to foreground disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction as one of the key factors for achieving sustainable economic growth, as reflected in the MGDS II (2012 – 2016). This document points out under theme 3 that the magnitude, frequency and impact of disasters have been increasing owing to climate change, population growth and environmental degradation. In response to these challenges, the Government of Malawi will implement a number of strategies, including those to strengthen DRM coordination mechanisms, to develop an integrated national early warning system and to implement mitigation measures in disaster-prone areas.

These deliberate steps taken by the Government to tackle DRR issues are evident in several initiatives, most of which are discussed below.

b) The Hyogo Framework for Action

Malawi is a signatory to the HFA adopted by 168 states in Japan in 2005. The signing of the Hyogo Framework by Malawi in 2005 stimulated the beginning of the paradigm from response to risk management. Malawi has now fully domesticated the HFA, and most of its guiding documents have been aligned to the HFA. In accordance with the recommendations of the HFA(2005-2015): Building the resilience of nations and commu-

4 Vulnerability is defined as: “The conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes that increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards”. (www.unisdr.org/2004/wcdr-dialogue/terminology.htm)

5 Disaster risk is defined as: “The potential disaster losses, in lives, health status, livelihoods, assets and services that could occur to a particular community or a society over some specified future time period”. (www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology)

6 Disaster is defined as: “A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources”. (www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology)

nities to disasters (HFA), states have the primary responsibility for taking measures to reduce disaster risk and, by implication, for monitoring and reviewing their progress in implementing the HFA. In conformity with these obligations, Malawi has taken several steps to meet the requirements of the HFA commitments. With technical support from the UNISDR secretariat, Malawi has been conducting biennial progress monitoring and a review process via a multi-stakeholder engagement process. For example, the development of the NDRM policy is partly a direct response to the Hyogo Framework's obligations.

c) Disaster risk reduction framework (2010 – 2015)

In 2009, the Government of Malawi commissioned an assessment of the current situation in order to identify challenges and suggest strategies to address these issues that would lead to the formation of a policy. The issues were documented in the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework. Among the challenges identified were inadequate policy, strategy and budgetary process for disaster risk reduction; insufficient institutional capacity and planning process for disaster risk reduction; slow progress in shifting the mindset from response to integration of disaster risk reduction into development planning at all levels by all sectors; insufficient coverage and depth of DRR actions at community level; risk assessments and early warning systems are not upgraded and updated to meet the challenges posed by disasters; limited investment in knowledge and education for disaster risk reduction, and the non-existence of a multi-stakeholder forum for coordinating DRR stakeholders. The framework further highlights the importance of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into all sectoral policies and plans in order to achieve sustainable development.

A draft NDRM policy (2011) was also developed, which is proof that the Government of Malawi intends to integrate disaster risk reduction into the national development agenda. This step is in conformity with a number of key global commitments such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005 – 2015), and the Africa Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, among others.

d) Operational guidelines for disaster risk management

To ensure wider stakeholder involvement in DRM programmes in Malawi, operational guidelines for disaster risk management allocate roles to different DRM stakeholders at every level, including government ministries and departments, local authorities and civil society. Civil Protection Committees, which were initially established for civil protection (disaster response), have been given wider mandates. The operational guidelines also stipulate the roles of different DRM structures, which have been established in policy and legislation. All these structures are multisectoral in nature and have representatives from government ministries and departments, local authorities, civil society, parastatals, the private sector, academia and the media. There are also 11 Technical Subcommittees under the national DRM institutional structures, which are chaired by different government ministries and departments. Putting the chairmanship of these Subcommittees under different ministries and departments is also a way to ensure that DRM aspects are mainstreamed in the programmes of leading ministries. The Subcommittees have a co-chair which is an agency of the United Nations system and, at present, agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), United Nations Population Fund, World Food Programme(WFP), Food and Agriculture

Organization (FAO) and the Joint United Nations Programme in HIV/AIDS have largely integrated disaster risk management into their programmes and activities.

e) Disaster risk management policy

The DRM policy addresses the challenges that were identified in the National DRR Framework. It has six priority areas, the first one of which is “mainstreaming disaster risk management into sustainable development”. The six policy priority areas were aligned to the five priorities for action of the HFA. The policy also establishes a new institutional structure for disaster risk management in Malawi, which is more focused on risk management than civil protection. The institutional structures established under the policy were detailed in the aforementioned operational guidelines for disaster risk management.

f) Disaster risk management bill

Since the current legislation on disaster risk management being applied in Malawi is focused on civil protection, the Government is in the process of revising the legislation to reflect the paradigm shift. A draft DRM bill was developed to replace the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991). The shift in mindset is reflected in the broadening of the scope of the DRM bill. Its opening statement states that the act provides for: a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated disaster risk management system aimed at preventing or reducing the risk of disasters, mitigating the severity of disasters, fostering emergency preparedness, and providing a rapid and effective response to disasters and post-disaster recovery the establishment of a more effective institutional framework for disaster risk management in Malawi, and

g) DRM funding arrangements

The latter bullet point, for example, acknowledges the need to establish a more reliable funding ar-

angement, which until now has been one of the major challenges facing the adoption of a proactive approach to disaster risk management in the country.

h) Contingency planning

Malawi started developing contingency plans in 2007, initially focusing on floods. Since 2009, however, multi-hazard contingency plans have been developed at both national and local levels. Since 2010, the development of the national contingency plan has been based on the cluster approach where eight clusters were activated.

3.2 Institutional arrangements for disaster risk management in Malawi

The institutional framework for disaster risk management in Malawi has undergone major transformation since the establishment of the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in 1994. The Department was established by the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991), which was enacted after the Phalombe floods catastrophe. Its main role was to coordinate and implement measures to alleviate the effects of disasters. The Department operates under the Office of the President and Cabinet. Under the draft NDRM policy, a slight change to the names of the various committees is proposed within the institutional framework for disaster risk management in the country. However, the structure remains relatively the same, with the following committees each playing a specific role.

Cabinet Committee Responsible for Disaster Risk Management

The Cabinet Committee responsible for disaster risk management considers and makes recom-

mendations to Cabinet and provides direction to the National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee (NDPRC) on disaster risk management issues.

National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee

The NDPRC provides policy directions to the Department of Disaster Management Affairs on the implementation of DRM programmes. The Committee comprises Principal Secretaries of line ministries/departments, the Inspector General of Police, the Commander of Malawi Defence Force and civil society representatives and is chaired by the Chief Secretary. The NDPRC operates in accordance with the terms of reference stipulated in the operational guidelines for disaster risk management.

National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Technical Committee (Disaster Risk Management Platform)

The National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Technical Committee is a multi-stakeholder platform. It serves as an advocate of disaster risk management, providing advice and technical support and is the coordinating mechanism for mainstreaming disaster risk management into sustainable development policies, planning and programmes. It aims to contribute to the establishment and development of a comprehensive DRM system for Malawi.

This Technical Committee is chaired by the Commissioner of the Department of Disaster Management Affairs and functions in accordance with the terms of reference stipulated in the operational guidelines for disaster risk management. It is composed of designated senior representatives, who are formally appointed to serve on the Committee as the disaster risk management focal points for their government line ministries and departments, civil society organisations, scientific and academic institutions, the private sector, the

agencies of the United Nations system, the donor community and the media. In other words, thanks to the multi-stakeholder membership drawn from various relevant agencies, the Committee serves as the main mechanism through which disaster risk reduction is mainstreamed into these agencies and at all levels in the country. The Technical Committee was formalized as a DRM platform and was launched in early 2013. Reporting to the NDRM Committee⁷, the platform was established to play the following roles:

- To provide advice and guidance on technical issues to the NDRM Committee and the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs;
- To provide direction to the Technical Subcommittees outlined below;
- To receive and review reports from the Technical Subcommittees;
- To monitor and review the implementation of DRM activities in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action and the NDRM policy;
- To prepare annual reports on the country's implementation of the HFA;
- To ensure that line ministries and district councils have budget line items for disaster response;
- To conduct a disaster post-mortem at the end of each disaster response 'season';
- To receive and deliberate on reports of DRM activities from civil society organisations, district councils, ministries and departments and other agencies;
- To document lessons learnt and best practices in disaster risk management and share the findings nationally, regionally and internationally;

⁷ Overlaps of names in some cases are attributable to the many name changes taking place at present. For example the Department of Disaster Management Affairs is changing to the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs, as defined in the draft DRM Policy.

- To identify DRM needs (gaps, trends, concerns, challenges and opportunities) and make recommendations on how they are to be addressed;
- To advocate the integration of disaster risk management into a UN country support framework and into other donor agencies;
- To develop and periodically review result-based work plans for the platform;
- To submit reports on its activities to the NDRM Committee;
- To present reports of the Technical Committees to the NDRM Committee;
- To facilitate the development and review of contingency plans and other DRM documents;
- To facilitate the review of the DRM policy and the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991);
- To monitor the implementation of the DRM policy;
- To ensure that funding is made available for disaster preparedness, response, recovery and other disaster risk reduction interventions;
- To ensure that all humanitarian actors in the country abide by international agreements on the operations of humanitarian workers and organisations in times of disasters, including the Sphere Project Humanitarian Charter, the Code of Conduct for the Red Cross/Red Crescent and other NGOs, the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership and the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi;
- To mobilise resources, in conjunction with the NDRM Committee and the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs for the implementation of disaster risk management interventions in Malawi;
- To review and endorse DRM-related projects from civil society organisations, the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs and other stakeholders;
- To promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk management in policies, plans and programmes for all stakeholders;
- To review the quarterly reports published by the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs before submission to the Office of the President and the Cabinet and to other donor agencies;
- To commission DRM-related research and studies;
- To ensure that all government ministries, departments and relevant civil society organizations and agencies of the United Nations system have focal points for disaster risk management;
- To facilitate the formulation and review of guidelines and tools on disaster assessment, response, reporting and recovery;
- To conduct an annual evaluation on the operations of the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs;
- To promote international cooperation between the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs and other DRM stakeholders in Malawi and other countries;
- To facilitate the establishment of an effective integrated early warning system for Malawi and to ensure its sustainability;
- To assess the relevance, appropriateness and effectiveness of disaster prevention and mitigation measures undertaken by government ministries/departments, civil society organizations and communities;
- To recommend to the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs and the NDRM Committee the need for declaration of a state of disaster by the State President.

National Disaster Risk Management Technical Subcommittees

The National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Technical Committee establishes multidisciplinary technical subcommittees for proper coordination

and guidance in the planning and implementation of disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery programmes. The following technical subcommittees have been established:

- Agriculture and food security
- Health and nutrition
- Water and sanitation
- Early warning
- Search and rescue
- Transport and logistics
- Shelter and camp management

The establishment of Technical Subcommittees need not to be restricted to those listed above, the NDRM Technical Committee has the discretion to establish other subcommittees should the need arise or amend the terms of reference to accommodate additional functions. The Technical Subcommittees function in accordance with the terms of reference stipulated in the Operational Guidelines for Disaster Risk Management.

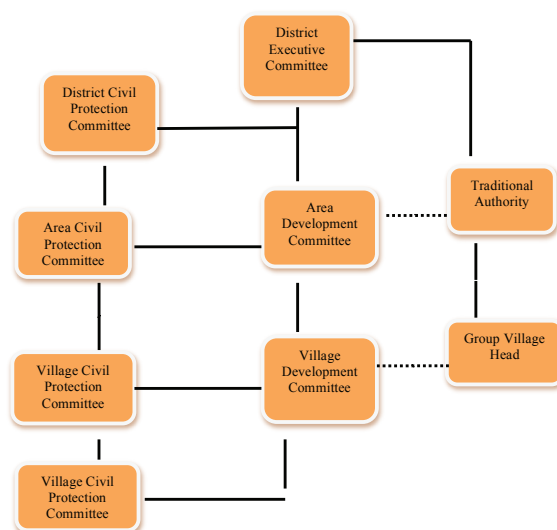
Department of Disaster Management Affairs

The **Department of Disaster Management Affairs** has the primary responsibility for managing and coordinating the implementation process of the policy. This means it is critically important to ensure that it has adequate and suitably qualified human resources and the necessary infrastructure and equipment to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs serves as the secretariat for the National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee, the National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Technical Committee and, as already indicated above, chairs the National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Technical Committee.

Decentralized disaster risk management structures

Decentralized DRM structures are linked to decentralized structures under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, as shown in figure 5 below. At district council level, there is a District Civil Protection Committee, which is a subcommittee of the District Executive Committee.

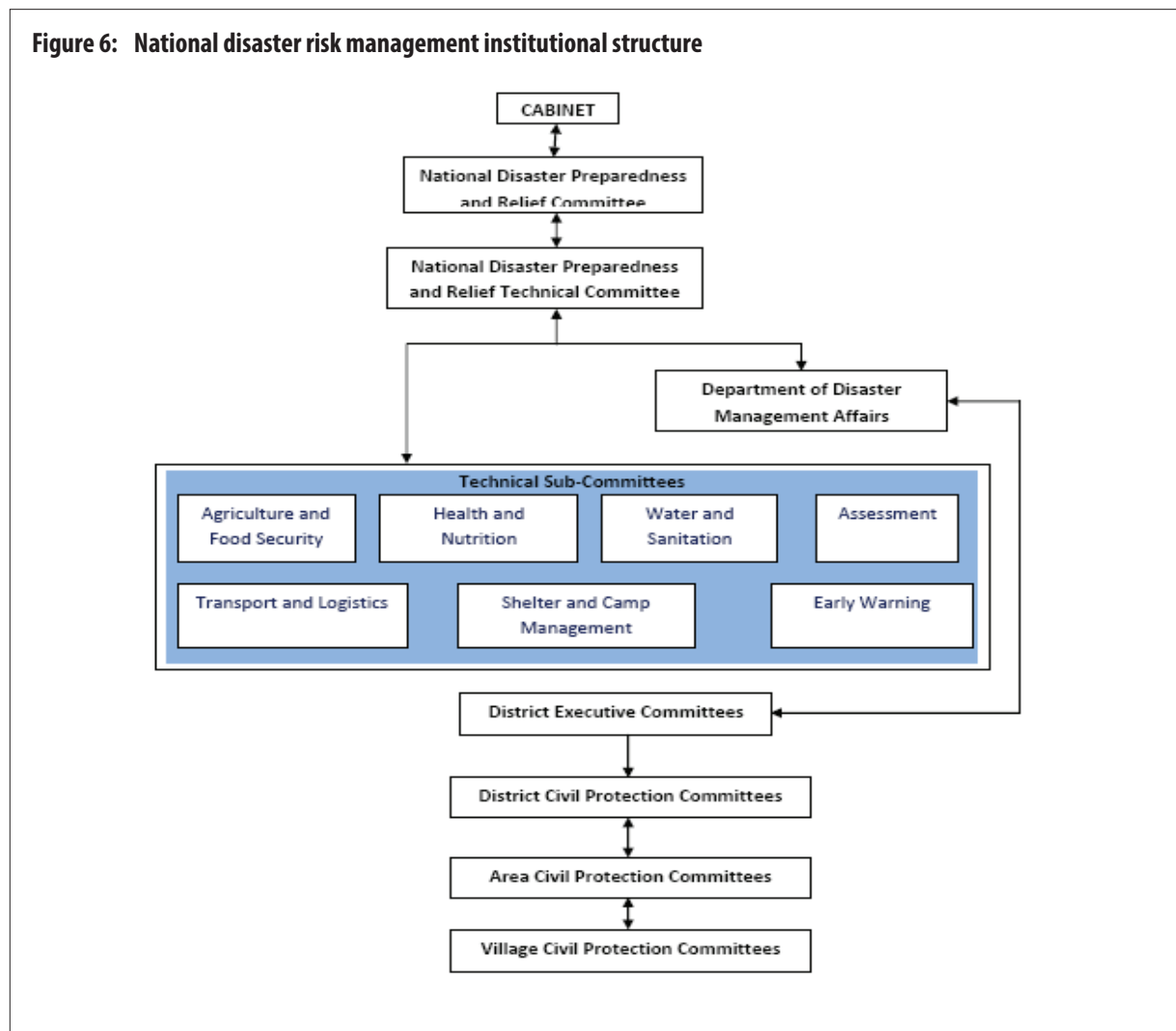
Figure 5: Decentralized disaster risk management structures



Source: GoM/DoDMA/UNDP. Draft Interim Operational Guidelines for Disaster Risk Management, 2009

This Committee is the technical arm of the district development planning and implementation of projects, whose membership comprises Heads of Departments⁸ and institutions represented at district level. Below the District Civil Protection Committee is the Area Civil Protection Committee, a subcommittee of the Area Development Committee, which is at the Traditional Authority level. The lowest level in this institutional structure is the Village Civil Protection Committee, a subcommittee of the Village Development Committee at the group village head level.

These decentralized DRM committees are responsible for coordinating the implementation of disaster-related activities including emergency relief operations at the various levels of the district. The committees function in accordance with the terms of reference stipulated in the Operational Guidelines for disaster risk management.



8 Examples: District Agriculture Development Officer, District Health Officer, Heads of NGOs etc.

4. Mainstreaming and implementation of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation interventions in development frameworks

4.1 Extent of mainstreaming disaster risk management into development frameworks at national and subnational levels

The need to pass the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act in 1991 arose from the flash floods that occurred in 1989 and from the realization that an institutional mechanism or system was not in place to coordinate relief operations. Despite the fact that Malawi has experienced different types of disasters over the years, floods and droughts remain the main hazards affecting the country. The Lower Shire's experience during the recent past has revealed that alternating floods and droughts have become a norm rather than an exception in these districts. However, while floods tend to be more endemic to some districts of the country, droughts affect most parts of the country in varying degrees. During much of the past two decades, the occurrence and intensity of these disasters have tended to rise. It has therefore become increasingly evident that these occurrences should no longer be taken as emergencies because they are quite predictable. Additionally, experience has clearly shown that 'single dose' interventions usually planned in an emergency have failed to produce lasting solutions to these problems. For example, the refrain of "Each time floods hit the Lower Shire, we never seem to know their source of origin" is all too familiar. This situation is compounded by an ever-growing list of hazards, of which some have occurred as a direct or indirect result of climate change.

The absence of a comprehensive strategy has thus meant a delayed response, in addition to the huge socioeconomic and environmental losses

that arise from disasters. It has been recognized that these impacts could be significantly minimized if a proactive strategy were developed and implemented. This situation has triggered the need to change the mindset from a mere emergency response to one taking account of disasters as part and parcel of the development planning process – in other words, the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction in development planning at all levels.

4.1.1 Malawi growth and development strategy and mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction

The Government of Malawi recognizes that natural disasters and calamities can have negative effects on its efforts to ensure sustainable economic growth and the development of the country. As already highlighted in section 3.1.1, the magnitude, frequency and impact of disasters have been increasing, given climate change, population growth and environmental degradation. Disasters disrupt people's livelihoods, endanger human lives and food security, damage infrastructure and hinder economic growth and development, among other things. Disasters also increase the poverty of both rural and urban households and erode the ability of the national economy to invest in key social sectors that are vital for reducing poverty. Poor households, particularly those headed by females, are more vulnerable to disasters since women tend to be more reliant on the environment for food and are primary gatherers of water and firewood⁹. According to the Malawi growth and development strategy, it is therefore important to harness wealth creation

⁹ Government of Malawi (2011): Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II

and poverty reduction by putting in place adequate disaster risk management measures that go beyond a mere emergency response to preparedness, prevention and mitigation, as well as rehabilitation and reconstruction. In other words, the Government of Malawi realizes that it cannot achieve its medium to long-term objectives of economic growth and poverty reduction without investing in disaster risk management strategies in a more sustainable manner.

The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II, 2011- 2016) is a medium-term national development strategy formulated to achieve the country's long-term development aspirations, as espoused in Malawi's Vision 2020. It represents a decisive and strategic single reference document to be followed by all stakeholders to achieve the goal of wealth creation through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development. To ensure that appropriate strategies are incorporated into its overarching development strategies, it is pointed out in the MGDS II under theme 3 (sub-theme 2) that, during the cycle of its implementation (2011 – 2016), the Government will implement a number of actions aimed at improving preparedness, response and recovery from disaster, as well as risk management. The relevant government ministries and agencies will implement these actions in collaboration with non-state actors, including the private sector.

The Government notes that disaster risk management is currently facing a number of challenges in Malawi, which include the lack of policy¹⁰ and strategy to effectively coordinate DRM activities; inadequate institutional capacity both at local and national levels to effectively carry out DRM activities; insufficient coverage and depth of disaster reduction activities; the lack of an updated and upgraded risk assessment system for early warning; limited investment in knowledge and

education for disaster risk reduction. The long-term goals of disaster risk management in Malawi are thus twofold: first, the reduction in the socio-economic and environmental impact of disasters and, second, the development of a strong disaster management mechanism for the country.

The specific strategies outlining how these goals are to be achieved are summarized in the matrix provided in the annexes.

4.1.2 National Adaptation Programme of Action as a vehicle for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction

The Malawi National Adaptation Programme of Action was developed in 2006 under the leadership of the Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment and launched by the President of Malawi in 2008. Under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, NAPA was developed in a bid to understand the changes in the nature and pattern of different hazards to which the country is exposed. Hence, the NAPA document was developed to enable Malawi address its urgent and immediate adaptation needs caused by climate change and extreme weather events. Specifically, the document aims to: (i) identify a list of priority actions, (ii) formulate priority adaptation options, (iii) build capacity for adapting to longer-term climate change and variability, and (iv) raise public awareness about the urgency to adapt to the adverse effects of extreme weather events.

The document therefore clarifies the impact of climate change on disasters. Some of these disasters, especially droughts and floods, have grown in frequency, intensity and magnitude, become increasingly unpredictable over recent decades and adversely affected food and water security, water quality, energy and the sustainable livelihoods of

¹⁰ A draft National Disaster Risk Management Policy is already in development but awaits approval by parliament.

rural communities. The Government of Malawi realizes that any aspirations to reduce poverty in Malawi in a sustainable way will require strategic and proactive investment in DRM activities.

Malawi developed its National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) by evaluating the impacts of adverse climatic conditions in eight important sectors of economic growth and ranked the identified actions using multicriteria analysis to arrive at a list of 15 urgent and immediate priority needs for adaptation. The sectors analysed are agriculture, water, human health, energy, fisheries, wildlife, forestry and gender. It was noted in these analyses that there was need to urgently implement these priority actions so as to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities to the adverse impacts of extreme weather events caused by climate change – a situation that will enable rural communities to adapt to climate change and attain food security, alleviate poverty, reduce environmental degradation and achieve sustainable rural livelihoods.

Urgent actions from the list of priorities identified that were rated 'High' were combined into project clusters for the purposes of developing a short list of five project profiles. Each project profile contained a number of related adaptation activities and identified the required inputs, outputs, institutional arrangements and a proposed budget. The NAPA document further pointed out that the component activities within each project cluster could also be implemented separately depending on funding opportunities. The list of the proposed project profiles in NAPA is as follows:

- To improve community resilience to climate change through the development of sustainable rural livelihoods
- To restore forests in the Upper and Lower Shire Valley catchments to reduce siltation and related water flow problems

- To enhance agricultural production in the event of erratic rains and changing climatic conditions,
- To boost Malawi's preparedness to cope with droughts and floods
- To improve climate monitoring in order to enhance Malawi's early warning capability, decision-making and sustainable utilization of Lake Malawi and lakeshore areas resources

Malawi needed to implement these proposed projects urgently and immediately to enable vulnerable rural communities and groups in targeted areas to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. However, it was reported that only a few of these proposed activities under NAPA have been implemented to date: notably, a Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded programme implemented by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and Climate Change Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture.

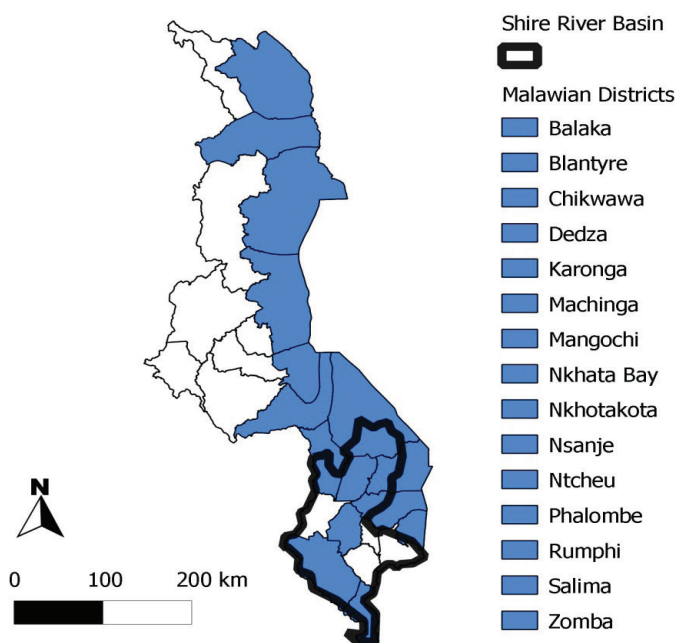
NAPA identified seven districts most vulnerable to disasters in which the pilot projects would be implemented. The seven districts identified were: Karonga, Salima, Kasungu, Zomba, Mulanje, Chikwawa and Nsanje. The number of disaster-prone districts has since increased to 15. These are: Karonga, Salima, Nkhotakota, Rumphu, Nkhata Bay, Mangochi, Dedza, Ntcheu, Balaka, Zomba, Phalombe, Machinga, Blantyre, Chikwawa and Nsanje.

Although disaster risk reduction is being mainstreamed at all levels and in every district of Malawi, the 15 districts listed above are the priority target districts for various initiatives that are aimed at building the resilience of communities. This is why the Department of Disaster Management Affairs has recruited and deployed Assistant District Disaster Risk Management Officers to 14 of these districts. Additionally, these officers were deployed to these disaster-prone districts on the

recognition that the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction could not be effectively carried out by relying on Desk Officers, most of whom were already too pre-occupied with their normal duties or they had poor or scant knowledge of DRR issues. It is expected that over time Assistant

sides being used to align initiatives to the HFA, NAPA is employed to select the most urgent interventions based on the lists that were developed when this document was designed.

Figure 7: Fifteen priority flood-prone and drought-prone districts in Malawi



Source: Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)-UNDP Early Warning System Malawi Project Document, 2013

District Disaster Risk Management Officers will be deployed to all 28 districts in the country. This is proof that the Government of Malawi has adopted DRR mainstreaming as a core action in its overall development planning and programming.

NAPA has since become a guiding document to development practitioners in the selection and design of CCA initiatives and to those who aim to build community resilience. Our consultations with the United Nations, government agencies and civil society organisations revealed that, be-

4.1.3 Tools and challenges for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development frameworks at national and subnational levels

The extent of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in Malawi is monitored via the HFA Monitor tool. This is an online tool used to capture data on progress in the HFA, which is generated through the multi-stakeholder review process. The HFA Monitor tool was designed and coordinated by the UNISDR secretariat and is hosted online at www.preventionweb.net. The primary purpose of

the tool is to assist countries to monitor and review their progress and challenges in the implementation of disaster risk reduction and recovery actions undertaken at the national level in accordance with the Hyogo Framework's priorities. This section gives a brief account of Malawi's progress in implementing the HFA priorities and, by the same token, the extent of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in the country.

First, disaster risk reduction will be guided by the draft NDRM policy, ready to be submitted to Cabinet and when the process of reviewing the 1991 Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act has started. Effective implementation at all levels requires developing the capacity of institutions and staff as well as appropriate resource allocation. In 14 out of 28 districts, the Department has stationed staff to ensure the further integration of DRM principles. This representation of staff at district level also ensures effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in individual projects funded by the Government's own sources and external resources. This is an important step ensuring that projects' outcomes will lead to more resilient communities and reduced disaster risks.

Second, to make better use of knowledge, education and innovations in order to promote a culture of safety and the adoption of interventions that enhance resilience, including the strengthened capacity for effective response and recovery from disasters at all levels, a forum was organized where disaster risk management and climate change presentations were shared and published. The Shire River Basin Management Project and related projects promote a strong local culture for disaster risk reduction, investment and proactive measures required to support local development structures such as village and area development committees and Civil Protection committees at district, city council and levels for response-oriented disaster risk reduction.

Third, all early warning systems-related project proposals since 2010 are geared towards putting in place an effective system to identify, assess and monitor national and cross-border risks, leading to a people-centred early warning system strengthened at national and local levels. Tools and mechanisms for the incorporation of risk reduction preparedness, response and recovery programmes are being adopted and developed both within Government and in conjunction with stakeholders. People and institutions are being made aware and motivated to participate in activities aimed at reducing risks. To develop essential skills and knowledge to integrate and manage disaster risk reduction, the Government actively participates in educational curricula reviews and development at all levels.

Fourth, the aforementioned National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Technical Committee is composed of designated senior representatives who are formally appointed to serve on the Committee as the disaster risk management focal points for their government line ministries and departments, civil society organisations, scientific and academic institutions, the private sector, agencies of the United Nations system, the donor community and the media. In other words, through the multi-stakeholder membership drawn from various relevant agencies, the Committee serves as the main mechanism through which disaster risk reduction is mainstreamed into these agencies and at all levels in the country. As noted already, this Committee was formalized as the DRM platform and was launched in early 2013. The DRM platform thus serves as a major link between policy and practice. For example, NGO consortiums are able to share field-level experiences with policymakers via their participation in this platform.

The main challenge to effectively mainstreaming disaster risk reduction remains the fact that a budget line for disasters in national and decentralized level budgets still does not exist. In fact,

the Government does not allocate adequate resources to disaster risk reduction activities at either national or district level. This hinders the implementation of DRR projects. What this means is that, despite the fact that the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy has clearly highlighted the impact of disasters on the national economy and that deliberate efforts need to be taken to address this phenomenon, in reality Malawi largely focuses on disaster response. This entails a lack of effective disaster mainstreaming. While the Government provides funds for disaster response, these resources are inadequate to respond to every disaster that occurs in a season and these are usually provided late. There is no budget line for disaster risk management in ministries, departments, city, municipal and district councils that could have been used to channel funds for implementing DRM activities at these levels.

The Department of Disaster Management Affairs has for the past two years been lobbying for DRR funds and the creation of a budget line for disaster risk management, and efforts are still being made to that effect. However, in districts where NGOs are actively operating, district Civil Protection Committees have been technically and financially assisted to develop DRM plans. For instance, Balaka, Ntcheu and Phalombe are districts with these plans.

It is further reported that more cash inflows are recorded for disaster response than for disaster risk reduction (partners prefer supporting response to disaster risk reduction). As indicated already, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs is not provided with funds for disaster risk reduction. However, the funds are provided to ministries and departments for their development activities, some of which turn out to be DRR activities. But data on the finances for such activities are not disaggregated to allow for a clear analysis of the total amount for DRR activities that are being implemented in these ministries and departments.

District Councils are the basic planning and implementation units for government programmes and projects at the district level under the decentralization system. This level is the most important level for disaster risk reduction to be mainstreamed. However, as already pointed out, there is no budget line for disaster risk reduction in either the national or decentralized budget. Although Civil Protection Committees exist in the district area and at the village level, the lack of resources for implementing DRR activities makes them non-functional and ineffective. Only in areas where NGOs are active do Civil Protection Committees exist both on paper and on the ground in communities. Nevertheless, through such donor-funded activities, District Councils and civil society organizations have gained reasonable experience in implementing community-based DRR initiatives such as small-scale irrigation schemes, local capacity-building, the relocation of people from flood-prone areas to safer areas, flood mitigation and early warning systems for floods.

What can be concluded from this section and the preceding one is that, despite the fact that the Government has developed various mechanisms and tools for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction at all levels, there is very little identifiable from public institutions as DRR interventions due the lack of budget line. While some actions already being implemented in the various ministries and departments constituted disaster risk reduction, it is still difficult to quantify them because the budget lines facilitating the implementation of these activities particularly at community levels do not explicitly indicate a DRR budget line. It can also be concluded that most DRR activities being implemented with donor support are implemented by civil society organizations and that the Department of Disaster Management Affairs benefits from such activities because it plays a coordi-

Table 5: Steps and tools used for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction

No.	Government ministry or agency	Steps and tools used for mainstreaming direct risk reduction
1	Ministry of Lands and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs the Spatial Planning, Shelter and Camp Management Technical Subcommittee and Cluster Has developed Guidelines for Safer House Construction, which is a technical manual on how to construct houses that can be resilient to hydro-meteorological, geophysical, biological and technological hazards. The manual is being used to train communities in the districts and communities.
2	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Through the Department of School, Health and Nutrition, coordinates issues related to education in emergencies. The ministry also chairs the Education Technical Subcommittee as well as the Education Cluster. It is responsible for developing the education in emergencies contingency plan, which is fed into the national contingency plan and has done so since 2009. As an Education Cluster, it is activated to respond to food insecurity, depending on the severity of the situation and develops response plans for education in emergencies.
3	Ministry of Health	Chairs the Health, HIV/AIDS and Nutrition Technical Subcommittee as well as the Cluster. They are responsible for preventing, controlling and managing all disease outbreaks that can occur, including those that occur during disasters. The Ministry of Health is responsible for developing the health, HIV and AIDS contingency plan, which is fed into the national contingency plan and has done so since 2009. It has also developed in selected strategic sites across the country stockpiles of WaterGuard (a dilute liquid bleach product for disinfecting water) and drugs that are distributed to affected communities during floods as a way of mitigating cholera outbreaks due to poor sanitation, which is usually associated with floods.
4	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Chairs the Agriculture and Food Security Technical Subcommittee as well as the Cluster. It uses the information generated by the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services to inform the general public and, particularly, the farming community about the expected rainfall pattern to guide them in their decision-making about the choice of crops and crop varieties, among other things.
5	Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services	Responsible for the generation and provision of early warnings for weather-related hazards. The weather warnings are seasonal forecasts, which guide farming communities in crop and variety selection, among other things. But the Department also provides weekly and daily weather forecasts. It also chairs the Early Warning Technical Subcommittee.
7	Department of Water Resources Management	Responsible for the generation and provision of early warnings for river flooding. It has a network of river flow monitoring equipment with personnel who collect data from various places across the country. The Department also chairs the Water and Sanitation Technical Subcommittee as well as the Cluster.
8	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	Disaster risk management at the local level is largely led by local authorities that fall under the Ministry. The Ministry is also in the process of recruiting DRM officers to be deployed to all 28 districts in the country. DRM issues have been included in nine of the 28 district development plans and district socioeconomic profiles.
9	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development	The Ministry chairs and houses the MVAC, which is responsible for assessing vulnerabilities to drought risks in the country.
10	Ministry of Gender and Child Development	The Ministry chairs the Protection Technical Subcommittee and the Protection Cluster. As a way of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction, the ministry has developed a training manual for DRM-related protection issues that is targeted at district level personnel involved in disaster risk management

Note: Those ministries chairing particular technical committees or clusters take lead roles in risk management on issues related to their technical area. Their terms of reference are detailed out in the Operational Guidelines for Disaster Risk Management. They are, for instance, responsible for developing contingency plan components for their cluster, resulting in vulnerability assessments and disaster impact assessments related to their technical areas. They also develop response plans related to their technical areas and coordinate their implementation, depending on the type and magnitude of disaster.

nating role. This is why Malawi’s experience with respect to good practices and the documentation of challenges in implementing DRR activities are largely generated by civil society organizations.

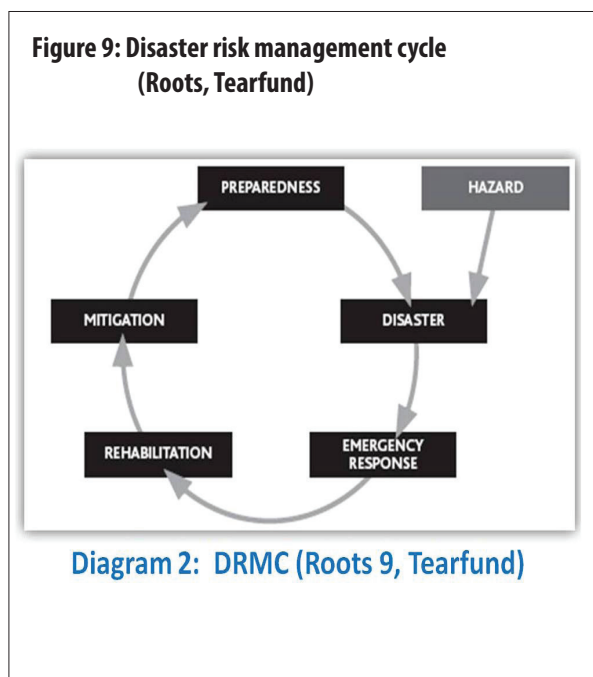
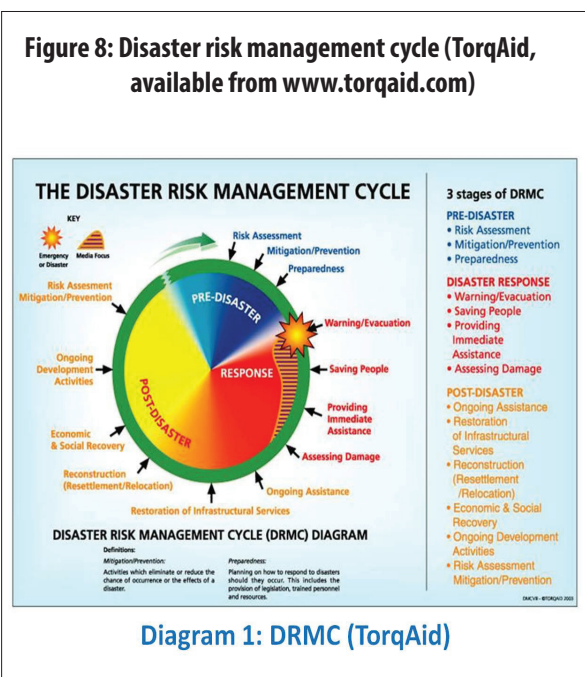
Nevertheless, some government ministries and agencies have made significant steps in creating the necessary institutional structures for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in their sectors. These have been summarized in Table 5 below.

4.2 The role of civil society organizations in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction

This section provides a brief account of the role of civil society organizations in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and their progress in DRM-related work in Malawi. The information looks at how their work has evolved in the past three decades mostly in relation to the DRM cycle and to global developments in disaster management work. The DRM cycle shown in the two diagrams below can be thought of as having three stages:

pre-disaster, disaster response and post-disaster as depicted in figure 8. These stages can be broken down into four parts: preparedness, response, rehabilitation and mitigation as shown in figure 9. In view of the DRM cycle concept, this section therefore looks at the growth of civil society organizations’ DRR work in relation to these stages over the previous 30 years. The assessment reviewed relevant documents produced by various civil society organizations and interviewed a few DRR and development practitioners from different civil society organizations to understand the progress of their DRR-related work in the country. The data collected was triangulated with the researcher’s knowledge and many years’ experience of DRR work to analyse and discuss the issues.

It should be pointed out that civil society organizations are the main implementing agencies of various DRR activities that are taking place at decentralized levels in the country. This role, however, does not disregard their partnership with government agencies at these levels.



4.2.1 Reactive versus proactive approach in disaster management

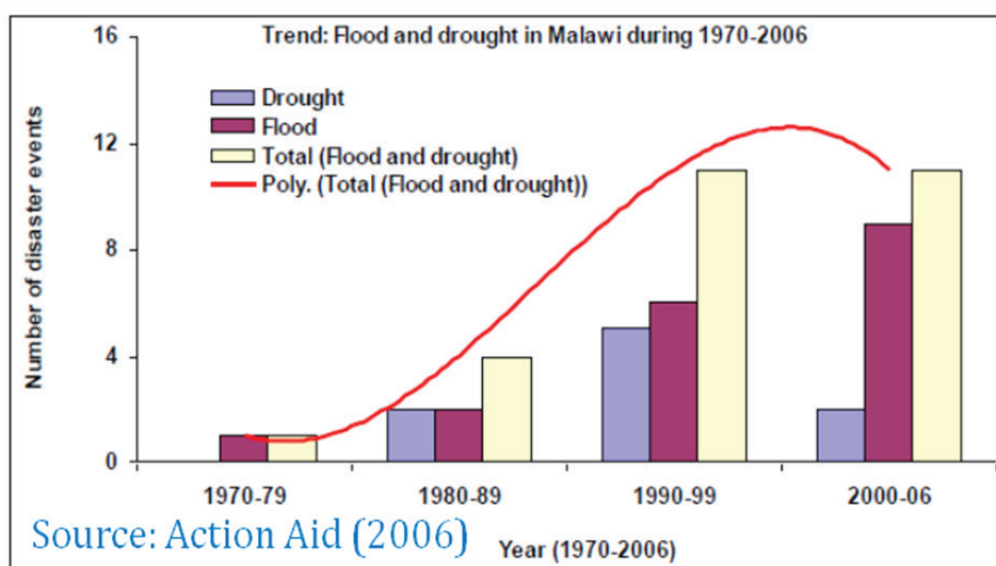
Over the years, civil society organizations at both a national and international level have played a significant role in supporting the Government of Malawi in a bid to help vulnerable communities respond to impacts of natural and climate-related disasters, especially droughts and floods. While records of large-scale natural disasters can be traced back to the infamous and critical drought-induced food shortage that hit the country in 1945, notable disaster management-related work by civil society organizations began in the late 1980s when Malawi received an influx of almost 1.2 million Mozambican refugees. This disaster management work largely focused on a humanitarian/relief response to help the refugees cope with the situation. A number of national civil society organizations mobilized resources both locally and externally to help the refugees and other Malawians indirectly affected by the influx. Agencies of the United Nations system such as UNHCR and WFP also partnered up with local NGOs to implement humanitarian operations for the refugees.

In addition to these humanitarian operations for Mozambican refugees, civil society organizations' work in relief response extended to nationals when the frequency of drought and flood disasters began to increase and affect more people from the early 1990s, as shown in the chart below. The work remained focused on disaster response more than any other stage or part of the disaster risk management cycle. Unfortunately, protracted and badly planned humanitarian operations ended up "defining the disaster management field as highly reactive and relief-oriented, and extremely dependent on outside initiative and financial support".

Dependence syndrome diseases

Poor and vulnerable communities such as those in the Lower Shire districts, which had long benefited from protracted humanitarian operations, developed a dependence-syndrome tendency, which eroded their self-worth, dignity and enthusiasm to harness locally available resources to engage in sustainable risk reduction interventions. In carrying out DRR activities, civil society

Consequences of the reactive approach in disaster management



organizations are finding it a bit difficult in some areas to rally communities to DRR-related work, which the latter view as something that strips them of their privilege to receive relief food packages. Humanitarian or relief operation work can be perceived as a 'handout' initiative. By contrast, disaster risk reduction is more a 'handup' initiative since its focus is to help build community capacity in order to prepare for and respond to disaster events. Most communities are therefore marked by a dependency-syndrome disposition brought about by protracted humanitarian operations and always loathe DRR initiatives when introduced. However, thanks to the use of participatory methodologies, risk assessment initiatives and capacity-building strategies, civil society organizations have managed to facilitate a change in communities' mindset, and increasingly more communities are now embracing the 'handup' approach.

Reactive approach promotes problem-based needs assessments more than appreciative enquiry promoted by proactive approach to develop community-based disaster risk reduction work

In most cases, the reactive approach to disaster management, which largely focuses on a disaster response with humanitarian or relief operations, is always problem-based initiated. A rapid needs assessment is done to identify critical necessities though, in some cases, this is not carried out comprehensively. Needs assessment focuses on what people need in the short term and is problem-based. The DRR concept emphasizes the need for carrying out a comprehensive risk assessment exercise, which provides the opportunity to communities to identify local capacities/resources that can be harnessed for risk reduction work, thereby ensuring the development of risk reduction measures guided by an appreciative enquiry. This proactive approach promotes the development and implementation of community-based disaster risk management programmes.

4.2.2 Paradigm shift by civil society organizations from reactive to proactive approach

As global efforts increased to promote a proactive approach in dealing with disasters, in the early 2000s a number of local civil society organizations in Malawi, in partnership with international funding organizations, began to engage in disaster management programmes with a focus on risk reduction measures. The advent of the HFA (2005-2015) provided an important instrument to guide the planning and implementation of thematic DRR measures. Currently a good many individual civil society organizations and consortiums are implementing DRR and CCA mainstreaming programmes related to the HFA (2005-2015) in over 18 districts at risk of drought and flooding in the country.

In addition to civil society organizations' efforts to promote a proactive community-based approach to disaster management through planning and implementing disaster risk management, the Government of Malawi as a signatory to the HFA took the initiative to raise the awareness of the machinery of government, especially district councils. In 2006 the Department of Disaster Management Affairs began nationwide DRM awareness and training workshops for all 28 district councils in Malawi, targeting the District Executive Committees comprising local government departments heads, district council officials and representatives of NGOs working in the district. Over the years, the Department has worked hard to produce national documents on disaster risk reduction such as the DRM Guidelines. Currently, the Department is finalizing the process of reviewing the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991), which largely hinged on a reactive approach so that it now reflects the DRR concept. Additionally, the Department has devised the first ever NDRM policy. However, despite tangible successes in DRR interventions and integration initia-

tives, maximizing their potential has been limited owing to different understandings of the DRR concept's scope and to other relevant challenges. This situation is examined below.

4.2.3 Tools used by civil society organizations to mainstream disaster risk reduction into community-level disaster management and development programmes

The assessment endeavoured to identify tools and approaches used by civil society organizations to mainstream and implement DRR and CCA measures. It also tried to ascertain the extent or level of practice in the process of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into disaster management and development programmes. The DRR Mainstreaming Framework mainly involves two processes: (a) the identification of disaster risks and (b) the planning and prioritization of suitable interventions to reduce risks to property and the exposed population and to lessen their vulnerability. Empirical tools and approaches are therefore needed to ensure effective and efficient planning and implementation, respectively. This section therefore provides information on the tools and approaches used by civil society organizations to plan for and to engage vulnerable communities to implement DRR and CCA integration measures. A review of project reports and documentation on best practices provided relevant data to ascertain the key tools and approaches employed and the level of practice.

Global recognition of the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into development agendas has been growing since the late 1990s. Hyogo Framework for Action developed in 2005 was a turning point for international efforts working towards globally coordinated disaster risk reduction. It is a useful reference tool in planning for the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into disaster management and develop-

ment programmes at any level. It urges governments and development stakeholders to give higher priority to risk-reducing activities. Since its inception in 2005, the Framework has been a key guiding instrument for governments and strategic stakeholders such as civil society organizations to make progress in the process of mainstreaming initiatives. It is therefore expedient that DRR practitioners and stakeholders have a thorough comprehension of the Framework in order to be effective in the planning and implementation of DRR mainstreaming measures at different levels, most especially at community level.

Tools have also been developed over the years to help development agencies to systematically and intentionally institutionalize mainstreaming DRR into development work. One such document is the ProVention project on Tools for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction: Guidance Notes for Development Organizations (2007) which provides a series of 14 guidance notes for use by development organizations in adapting programming, project appraisal and evaluation tools to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development work in hazard-prone countries. A similar tool is the Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction: a tool for development organizations developed by Tearfund UK in 2005. This tool, together with its performance targets and indicators, was developed to help integrate and expand disaster risk reduction initiatives into relief management and, particularly, into development planning and programming within development agencies. A thorough institutional understanding of such tools is vital to ensure a well-planned and intentional DRR mainstreaming process, instead of an ad-hoc approach.

Notwithstanding the diversity of approaches and tools used, the review has established that all the organizations consulted conduct participatory community vulnerability assessments in their target communities prior to implementing any DRR

actions. The main objective of these *ex-ante* assessments is to identify the main hazards to which communities are exposed and measure their level of vulnerability to the identified hazards. For all the organizations consulted, the assessments culminate into an action planning process where communities identify what needs to be done to address the hazards and vulnerabilities identified.

Participatory assessment of disaster risks

Most civil society organizations engaged in DRR work have embraced risk assessment as a pivotal tool to promote active participation of vulnerable communities in the planning and implementation of community-based disaster risk management projects. The tool is termed differently by civil society organizations, as some call it PVCA (participatory vulnerability and capacity assessment), others VCA (vulnerability and capacity assessment) or COVACA (community-owned vulnerability and capacity assessment). The tool promotes the use of suitable participatory methodological approaches to help vulnerable communities identify their risks to different hazards after carrying out comprehensive hazard assessment, disaster impact analysis, and vulnerability and capacity assessment. Communities that have carried out a thorough participatory assessment of disaster risks (PADR) feel empowered to engage in risk reduction activities armed with new knowledge. However, there is need for the Department of Disaster Management Affairs to facilitate a process to consolidate the tools so as to produce a standardized tool for nationwide use.

Community action planning

Community action planning is the end product of PADR. Participating communities and people are helped to come up with a range of suitable risk reduction measures to address vulnerabilities identified. Community action planning contains both short-term and long-term measures highlighting activities communities can implement using locally available resources without external support

and those they would implement with external support and a timeframe. This tool also provides communities with the opportunity for participatory monitoring and evaluation of the risk reduction measures planned.

4.2.4 Approaches to ensure sustainability of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and cross learning at community level

Civil society organizations have adopted and use several strategies in their DRR mainstreaming work to ensure sustainability and a long-lasting impact in the communities with which they work. The most prevalent expression used in recent years is “building the resilience of communities to disaster risks”.

a) Capacity-building of civil protection committees

Most civil society organizations are empowering Civil Protection Committees at district, area and village level to understand issues of disaster risk management, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and their responsibilities as decentralized local government structures overseeing disaster risk reduction work in their areas. In the NDRM structure led by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, Civil Protection Committees have the responsibility to plan for and carry out DRR measures in collaboration with different stakeholders in their areas. However, owing to resource limitation at national and district council level, these structures are not operational in every community. This means civil society organizations work with district councils to establish and orient these structures to be active in their project target communities. The initiative is commended both by district councils and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs because comparative assessments show that communities with established, trained and supported Civil Protection Committees are more advanced in DRR-related work than communities without these structures.

Different civil society organizations have developed training tools for training Civil Protection Committees and other community stakeholders in disaster risk management and climate change. Some of the manuals are: Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction Training Manual (Catholic Development Commission in Malawi), Community Disaster Risk Reduction Training Manual (Evangelical Association of Malawi/Christian Aid), and Disaster Risk Reduction Training Manual for Civil Protection Committees (Cooperazione Internazionale). It is also recommended that the Department of Disaster Management Affairs review and consolidate the manuals in order to devise a national standardized training tool.

b) Building capacity of participating households and community facilitators – community-level strategic alliances

Disaster risk reduction is more of a ‘handup’ than a ‘handout’ initiative as in purely relief and humanitarian operations. The assessment identified that most civil society organizations ensure that participating households are thoroughly informed about intended DRR interventions before implementation starts. In this way, targeted people are able to implement with knowledge, confidence and skills acquired. It is a sure recipe to ensure sustainability of DRR-related work even beyond the project’s lifespan because, with the acquired knowledge and skills, people are able to continue with the activities. The essential need for training cannot be overstated for “it is perhaps more important than any physical measure in one key aspect: training is dynamic. If you build a flood protection measure, it relates to our current knowledge of flood protection. If you train someone well, they will be able to respond to situations 30 years from now”. For example, people targeted for irrigation farming would first be trained in land and water management and irrigation equipment manage-

ment before they begin to irrigate their piece of land. Civil society organizations are also training village level development ‘catalysts’ for different sectors to serve as a model to other people of the community.

In the agriculture sector, for example, village agriculture extension workers or lead farmers are trained to promote community-wide adoption of weather and environmentally-related good farming technologies through demonstration plots. In Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), civil society organizations are training village agents and providing them with tools to mobilize communities to establish more groups.

c) Building community-level strategic alliances

Civil society organizations are promoting community-level synergies in DRR interventions to ensure that every structure is doing its share to contribute to community-level risk reduction work. A well-networked and organized community will ensure optimum use of limited resources for sustainable community-based DRR projects. Community stakeholders being encouraged to link together include, among others, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, government sectoral extension services providers, community leaders and the education sector.

d) Supporting the development and implementation of district disaster risk management plans

This is an individual isolated approach piloted by a civil society organization where a District Council is technically and financially supported to develop a district DRM plan. The process involves the District Civil Protection Committee to engage with Area and Village Civil Protection Committees to collect relevant data to develop the plan. Once the plan is developed, the organization provides funds for the implementation of risk reduction plans included in the plans. It is a good approach,

as it provides an opportunity for the District Council and Civil Protection Committees to implement their community-hatched risk reduction plans.

4.2.5 Networking among civil society organizations in disaster risk reduction/climate change adaptation programmes and projects

Malawi has for more than a decade witnessed major changes in the way civil society organizations operate as they support government development activities in various sectors. This has also involved civil society organizations' operations in DRR and CCA initiatives. In the past, most NGOs operated independently of each other, and cases of conflict at the implementation level were reported frequently. However, the general trend these days is that organizations that are either receiving funding from the same donor or working on similar development problems tend to establish experience and knowledge-sharing mechanisms, which have enhanced their level of programming and impact. This trend has resulted in the development of several models of NGO consortiums in Malawi, all addressing different aspects of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Four examples of such NGO consortiums are discussed below. It is also through these networks that good practices are shared and the Government is supported through the NGOs advocating policy change that would enhance DRR mainstreaming in the country.

While this approach has its own challenges, the strategy provides among things opportunities for sharing skills and expertise; increasing the effectiveness of policy change advocacy; the testing and scaling-up of good practices. Information from four main NGO consortiums has been used in this section to demonstrate the synergies and

partnerships that civil society organizations have established over the years as a means to minimize conflict while enhancing information-sharing among like-minded organizations.

a) NGO Consortium for Disaster Preparedness of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department

Disaster Preparedness of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (DIPECHO) is a programme set up by the European Commission's Humanitarian Department (ECHO) to improve the capacities of communities at risk to better prepare and protect themselves from natural disasters. In Malawi, the EU has been supporting selected NGOs through this Department since October 2008 in the implementation of DRR activities under the First DIPECHO Action Plan. Four NGOs formed the key partners under the DIPECHO umbrella in Malawi, which expired in December 2009¹¹. These are Goal Malawi, Cooperazione Internazionale, Christian Aid and the Evangelical Association of Malawi. The Evangelical Association of Malawi and Christian Aid have been jointly implementing disaster preparedness and mitigation projects in Chikwawa district, while Goal Malawi has been operating in Nsanje and COOPI in Salima district. According to the financing decision ECHO/DIP/BUD/2008/04000, the overriding objective of the DIPECHO Action Plan for phase 1 was "to support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for, mitigate and respond adequately to natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope and respond, thereby increasing resilience and reducing vulnerability", primarily by:

11 Several DIPECHO action plans have since been prepared, and the fourth one is currently being implemented.

- focusing on the areas most exposed to frequent natural disasters and with less coping capacities. Special attention was given to remote and difficult-to-access areas.
- targeting the most vulnerable communities and categories of population with the lowest coping capacities, using bottom-up participatory methods and relevant local materials and resources. Specific attention was given to projects addressing gender, children and the disabled in line with the strategy of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department targeting the most vulnerable populations. Furthermore, particular attention was paid to designing activities taking into consideration the specific needs and vulnerabilities of groups living with HIV and AIDS in areas of high prevalence.
- fostering appropriate and sustainable preparedness activities that are coordinated with local and national public institutions and that are easily replicable in other parts of the region and beyond.
- supporting small-scale mitigation and prevention activities that have a demonstrative, complementary purpose and a proven impact and that can be easily replicable in other parts of the region and beyond.
- reinforcing local response capacities by building stocks of emergency and relief items.

Based on the lessons learnt in DIPECHO I, a Food Security in Disaster Risk Reduction Project was designed and implemented in all the three districts during DIPECHO II. It was noted that natural hazards – mainly floods and cyclones – put at risk not only the lives of individuals, but also their livelihoods, especially for those based on agriculture. It was further recognized that although DIPECHO

1 interventions were indeed necessary to achieve the principal objective of preparing the communities at risk to better cope with the impacts of natural disasters – primarily, through the saving of human lives – they did not respond well to the communities' other pressing concern: acute food insecurity brought about by the continuous succession of natural catastrophes such as floods. FAO provided the technical support, coordination and harmonized monitoring and evaluation framework to have information on best practices and models for improved food security in DRR policy and programming during the implementation of this project by the NGOs in the three target districts.

Despite the fact that these NGOs operated in separate districts, except for Christian Aid and the Evangelical Association of Malawi, they held regular jointly-funded meetings to share experiences. Each NGO has thus been involved in compiling lessons learnt and identifying best (good) practices that are shared among the member NGOs and other stakeholders within Malawi but also at the regional level. The leadership to coordinate such meetings is assigned on a rotational basis among these NGOs. They also carry out joint planning with the participation of other stakeholders such as the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, where each stakeholder develops proposals for donor funding based on their areas of expertise. For example, during the First DIPECHO Action Plan, Cooperazione Internazionale had a strong geographic information system (GIS)-mapping component in their activities because of the existing expertise in this organization.

b) Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement

Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement is a five-year USAID-funded food security programme implemented in southern Malawi. The programme is in its fourth year of operations, which ran from May 2009 to September 2014.

Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement is the transformation of another five-year USAID-funded programme, Improving Livelihoods through Increasing Food Security (I-LIFE) NGO consortium, which ended in 2008. The programme is implemented through a consortium of eight NGOs with Catholic Relief Services as the grant holder. The other consortium member organizations include: World Vision, Save the Children US, Africare, Emmanuel International, Project Concern International, Total Land Care, Chikwawa Diocese and the merged Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance. Although each NGO has its own budget, the latter is channelled via Catholic Relief Services as the coordinating NGO.

The programme is implemented in eight districts and covers a total of 39 Traditional Authorities, all in southern Malawi. By the end of five years, it aims to reach out to 115,000 households—mainly the most vulnerable among smallholder farmers. Livelihood assessments in these districts informed the programme design and the selection of target sites with full participation of key stakeholders within each district. The project is designed in such a way that most beneficiaries receive support for a combination of interventions. Among the relevant (to this study) key support areas are the following:

Agriculture

- Enhancing agricultural productivity
- Watershed management
- VSLA whereby 20,000 households will benefit.
- Small-scale irrigation
- Agricultural marketing

Community Resilience Building

- Direct food distribution for chronically ill householders

- Implementation of food for work/Assets in watershed management
- Seed fairs to enhance household seed security

The partners of the Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement programme did not explicitly address disaster risk reduction in the initial stages of the project. However, a DRR strategy for the programme was its subsequent development, which is to target a total of 137 Group Village Head areas to build their capacity for disaster mitigation. Of particular importance, however, is the fact that all the consortium members are implementing a similar package of interventions in these areas of operation. In other words, every projects covers:

- food security
- maternal and child health and nutrition
- livelihoods
- community resilience.

It has been pointed out that Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement is a food security organization and not a DRR organization, as it focuses only indirectly on disaster risk reduction in the context of food security. For example, if households’ seed security were to decline following a disaster, how could this be addressed? Incidentally, the districts in which the organization is operating are some of the most disaster-prone in Malawi. Hence, it has been signalled that disasters-related issues cannot be overlooked entirely.

c) Civil Society Network on Climate Change and its genesis

The Civil Society Network on Climate Change was launched in 2007 on World Environment Day. Until then, the Coordination Union for the Rehabilitation of the Environment used to coordinate this event. During this event whose theme was “Climate and Environment”, it was noted that there were many

NGOs¹² working on climate change but who were not coordinated, thereby making little impact on government policy processes. This event also coincided with the preparations for the 16th Conference of the Parties (CoP16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the position of civil society organizations was still not clear because of the uncoordinated nature of their work. These organizations required to develop a clearer position as one grouping.

Hence, there was a need to bring together the institutions working in this area – to come together as a network. It was felt that the united voice of a group of civil society organizations would be more audible to the Government than if the member organizations continued to operate in isolation owing to their greater potential in influencing government policy. The Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy, with financial support from the Norwegian Civil Society Mechanism for Strengthening Environmental Movements in the South Board via the Development Fund of Norway was therefore mandated to establish this network.

The membership of the network has grown over the years and is currently close to 30 NGOs. Fully established in 2008, the network's *raison d'être* was to facilitate collaboration and provide policy positions to relevant stakeholders including government and policymakers on climate change and disaster risk reduction in Malawi. The Civil Society Network for Climate Change comprises a diverse range of local NGOs, international NGOs, and faith-based organizations, as well as networks and associations. Civil society organizations have a compelling role to play in climate change adaptation, mitigation, policy and advocacy by engaging at various levels with government and society. The Network's vision is building the resilience of communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. In addition, its mission is to pro-

vide a platform for engagement between government and civil society organizations on climate change and related fields for improving adaptation and mitigation to climate change impacts.

The Centre for Environmental Policy Advocacy hosts the Network's secretariat. In other words, it provides the office space and administrative functions of the network. The Centre also recruits the Network's coordination staff¹³ and provides part of the coordination costs. The current coordinator of the Network is an employee of the Centre with other responsibilities at the Centre but spends about 40 percent of the time on the Network's activities. The Centre provides day-to-day supervision and guidance of the Network's coordination functions with the Executive Director as the line manager of the Network's Coordinator. Most of the coordination costs are still borne by the Centre. However, the funding of the Network's other activities is on ad hoc basis. For example, if the Catholic Development Commission of Malawi has some results from their community level activities that they would like to share with the wider community of the Network's membership, they would fund the event. Clear fundraising modalities still remain undefined for the network.

d) Developing Innovative Solutions with Communities to Overcome Vulnerability

The Enhancing Community Resilience Programme is being implemented with support from the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for a period of five years starting from September 2011. The programme is being implemented in the most disaster-prone 11 districts of Malawi by two consortiums of NGOs:

12 Climate change was also a new area for the Centre of Environmental Policy Advocacy.

13 Reflected in the organizational chart of the Centre for Environmental Policy Advocacy in figure 2 (see annex).

- a) Developing Innovative Solutions with Communities to Overcome Vulnerability through Enhanced Resilience (DISCOVER) coordinated by Concern Universal, and
- b) Enhancing Communities' Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change in Malawi coordinated by Christian Aid.

Specifically, the DISCOVER project will work with communities and local government structures in order 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. It represents a direct response to urgent and immediate adaptation needs of the most vulnerable communities in Malawi, identified as top priorities by the Government of Malawi in the National Adaptation Programme of Action and by the relevant District Councils. DISCOVER aims to ensure that the most vulnerable communities and individuals are empowered to develop sustainable, entrepreneurial and innovative solutions to climate change variability. These solutions will provide an enduring platform to enable the wholesale shift from 'hanging in' to 'stepping up' and 'stepping out' livelihoods strategies in these resilient communities¹⁴.

Similarly, the Christian Aid-led Enhancing Community Resilience Programme NGO consortium project aims to contribute to realising the Hyogo Framework for Action by halving disaster losses and increasing communities' resilience to climate change by 2015 in Malawi. This strategy will enable households to build resilient livelihoods that are sustainable and profitable, incorporating natural resource management and risk reduction, increasing adaptive capacity and enabling vulnerable households to have a voice in decisions affecting them.

¹⁴ DISCOVER Narrative report.

In the menu of project components and activities, which these NGO consortiums are implementing, is the development of community early warning systems – scaling out one of the best practices from DIPECHO, and the project documents summarize these as follows:

- **Developing community-based early warning systems in flood and drought-prone areas.** In flood-prone areas, the development of community-based early warning systems will integrate Civil Protection Committees into the development of flood preparedness and response planning. This action will include the establishment of river-level monitoring systems, appropriate communication (e.g. mobile phone) linkages to ensure the transfer of flood-related information down the catchment, designated evacuation routes and shelter sites and the coordination of appropriate small-scale mitigation measures (such as flood protection embankments). Practical linkages between community and district planners will be established. This approach will be modelled upon and informed by community-based early warning systems that Christian Aid has been implementing in Malawi with DIPECHO funding and by other experiences of consortium partners. A different approach will be used for drought-prone areas, since drought effects often accumulate slowly over a considerable period of time and may linger for years after the drought event. Usually, it is difficult to determine the onset and end of drought. Drought impacts are non-structural and are spread over large geographical areas. For these reasons, the consortium will work with representatives from agencies responsible for monitoring the climate and water supply, particularly meteorological, hydrological and agricul-

tural services. These bodies will be instrumental in collecting, analysing and disseminating data on each of the relevant indicators (e.g. precipitation, temperature, evapotranspiration, seasonal weather forecasts, soil moisture, drought resistant seeds, stream flow, ground water, reservoir, lake, river levels, prices, markets and harvests).

- **Preparedness planning:** Consortium members, implementing partners and communities will increase their readiness for disasters through participatory preparedness planning that will ensure that the needs of both communities and implementing partners are met in the most effective and professional manner in the event of a natural disaster or any other major emergency. Every consortium member and implementing partner has a named member of staff with experience of disaster risk reduction who is responsible for actively preparing communities and Civil Protection Committees for specific or rapid onset hazards. Together, consortium staff and Civil Protection Committees frequently review and update local preparedness plans and work closely with the Department of Disaster Management Affairs and other relevant humanitarian agencies. Owing to these preparedness and response planning activities, the consortium and communities are able to anticipate, reduce the risks, mitigate to some extent the impact of disasters, protect development investments and save lives in times of need. An integral part of preparedness planning is formulating mechanisms to carry out transfers of food and non-food items during disasters. This included investigations into the viability of electronic cash transfers. A review of the drought system was carried

out at the inception phase with the objective of formulating and reviewing the list of drought early warning system indicators; adapting data and using them to inform this project, which is coordinated in conjunction with MVAC (Christian Action Research and Education –CARE – and Christian Aid became members during the inception phase; ActionAid is already a member).

4.2.6 State of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the programming of civil society organizations

The principal objective of assessing the experiences of civil society organizations in the mainstreaming and implementation of disaster risk reduction in Malawi was to highlight the extent or level of integration of civil society organizations and the implementation of DRR and CCA interventions, tools and approaches used, best practices and lessons learned, and provide action-oriented recommendations to scale up effective integration as well as mainstreaming and implementation of DRR activities in Malawi. Civil society organizations are strategic stakeholders and have a pivotal responsibility to complement government efforts to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into community-based development strategies within the framework of national development strategies, plans and programmes. The findings from this assessment may therefore help stakeholders comprehend progress on the mainstreaming and implementation of DRR and CCA interventions in community-based development strategies, appreciate approaches and tools used for mainstreaming and good practices tested. The assessment is also important because the resulting report will provide input for preparing the subregional assessment report. These reports will serve as key resources for the subregional DRR capacity development workshop, which will show-

case and promote, among other things, good practices to scale up both the mainstreaming and implementation of DRR measures as part of development frameworks.

The main question this assessment has endeavoured to answer was: How far have civil society organizations integrated disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into their community-based disaster management and development programmes? In order to gather the relevant information to answer this question and thus achieve the overall goal of the national assessment, the following specific objectives were considered significant:

- To ascertain the progress of civil society organizations' DRR-related work in Malawi
- To appraise civil society organizations' understanding of the DRR mainstreaming concept in relation to the DRM cycle, the HFA and the scope of application
- To identify and analyse tools and approaches used to mainstream and implement disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into disaster management and development programmes and ascertain the extent or level of application
- To identify and analyse good practices as well as success factors and lessons learned in civil society organizations' mainstreaming of DRR interventions in relation to the HFA
- To ascertain challenges faced by civil society organizations to plan for and implement effective DRR and CCA integration interventions at the local level

Many civil society organizations in Malawi are engaged in proactive approaches to disaster management, with an emphasis on employing a wide range of measures to reduce community vulnerability and risks arising from natural and climate-related hazards. However, much of the main-

streaming work is focused on the planning of individual projects in hazard-prone districts and on the capacity-building of vulnerable communities to engage in disaster risk reduction and development programmes than focusing on institutional realignment. Again, in most cases the planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction interventions do not look beyond the benefits to assess whether the means of these interventions will end up creating or, possibly even, increasing vulnerability. Unfortunately, the end is less likely to justify the means. The assessment discovered that civil society organizations are implementing quite a number of positive interventions with vulnerable communities that are aimed at reducing their vulnerability to recurrent and future potential hazards. However, the negative consequences of these interventions if any are not thoroughly assessed and considered before implementation. In this case, the quintessence of "mainstreaming risk reduction" is already betrayed. "Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction describes a process of fully incorporating disaster risk reduction into relief and development policy and practice. It means radically expanding and enhancing disaster risk reduction so that it becomes normal practice, and fully institutionalized within an agency's relief and development agenda"¹. It is therefore important that policy (strategy, procurement, guiding principle) should direct practice.

Mainstreaming has three purposes to ensure: (1) that all development programmes and projects are designed with evident consideration for potential disaster risks and to resist disaster impact; (2) that no development programme or project inadvertently increases vulnerability to disaster socially, physically, economically or environmentally; and (3) that all disaster relief and rehabilitation programmes and projects are designed to contribute to development aims and to reduce future disaster risk. It is therefore important for all stakeholders to assess whether the implementation of any development project or relief and rehabilita-

tion programme is being planned in such a way as to meet the stipulations of its purposes. For example, some common and popular DRR and CCA interventions such as small-scale irrigation farming, small-scale livestock development, borehole drilling for safe water and energy-efficient stoves, which are being implemented by most of the civil society organizations consulted, have the potential to inadvertently create vulnerability or to be at risk of hazard impact, if not well planned from the perspective of disaster risk reduction. A new borehole constructed in a low-lying area – either as a development project or in response to a flood or to drought-induced scarcity of safe drinking water – may not resist the impact of flooding if it is not mounted on raised concrete. In most cases, however, especially in low-lying areas like Chikwawa, Nsanje and Salima districts, new borehole-drilling is “business as usual”, with no assessment of the potential impact of flooding on the borehole being carried out and no risk management measures being put in place to ensure long-lasting development (see photos below).

Mainstreaming risk reduction is a process, and there is need for civil society organizations and the relevant stakeholders to put in place formal, systematic and intentional efforts to mainstream disaster risk reduction into their work, undertaking various related institutional, policy and procedural changes and adjusting operational practice. The tools discussed above can provide guidance to institutionalize the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into the overall development framework, viewing disaster risk reduction as an integral component of the development process rather than as an end in its own right. Unfortunately, most of these organizations are not guided by any relevant or tested tool. In fact, most of the individual development practitioners who were consulted have not examined any tools except for the Hyogo Framework of Action, which is used in most cases more to guide the development of DRR projects and as bait for

funding approval than as an ongoing reference document to monitor and evaluate DRR mainstreaming efforts. What’s more, although the HFA was developed in 2005, most practitioners became aware of the tool and began to reference it only three to five years later. Nevertheless, despite the challenges to making significant progress in institutionalizing the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into relief, rehabilitation and development projects, most civil society organizations have managed to promote community-based disaster risk reduction interventions. The tools and approaches used so far to encourage the implementation of DRR and CCA measures at community level include;

The assessment presumes that civil society organizations are in some way or other involved in the mainstreaming and implementation of disaster risk reduction. Considering that disaster risk reduction is not only an activity aimed at reducing vulnerability but also a concept that should promote a way of life, it was found important to attempt to measure people’s perception of the DRR concept and its practice. This section therefore presents an account of people’s understanding of the DRR concept, and how it has influenced the process of planning and implementing DRR interventions. The assessment interviewed a few DRR and development practitioners from different civil society organizations to analyse their professional qualifications in disaster risk management and their understanding of the DRR concept in relation to the Disaster Risk Management Committee, the Hyogo Framework for Action and to its scope of application or practice. The data collected were triangulated with research-led community level observations of DRR work and experience in facilitating DRR workshops for disaster management and development practitioners.



4.3 Mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development assistance frameworks

Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development planning in Malawi is supported by the United Nations and donor agencies. While the agencies of the United Nations system have a common development assistance framework in which such support is elaborated, donor agencies have different modalities through which they support the Government of Malawi in its efforts to mainstream disaster risk reduction into development planning at all levels¹⁵.

4.3.1 Role of the agencies of the United Nations system and development assistance frameworks

The United Nations makes a special contribution to the achievement of Malawi's growth and development objectives. It makes this contribution by supporting specific areas in which it feels it has a comparative advantage and extensive experience to make the most significant impact on the national economy. The Millennium Development Goals provide the basis of its strategic positioning and support for national development plans. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework sets out how the UN will support these national development plans. This Framework is thus the programmatic response of the United Nations system to the development needs and priorities of Malawi. The cen-

tral purpose of this Framework is to help Malawi achieve the Millennium Development Goals as locally formulated through the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, which is the overarching operational medium-term strategy for the country. Hence, the Framework has to align itself to the main objective of the Government of Malawi, which is to promote economic growth as a means to reduce both poverty and aid dependency, as well as to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The UN system supports the Government and people of Malawi to use their development resources effectively and accountably to achieve the objectives of the MGDS, attain the Millennium Development Goals and adequately respond to the right to development enshrined in the Malawi Constitution. Detailed result areas to which the UN will contribute are outlined in the Country Programme Action Plan as guided by UNDAF. Among other things, the Plan outlines the mutual obligations and working relationships between the Government of Malawi and the United Nations system, which are further articulated in the Country Programme Document, comprising indicators at baseline, targets to be achieved, as well as indicative resource allocation for each outcome.

Several agencies of the United Nations system support the Government of Malawi in DRR mainstreaming initiatives at various levels. The most active in this area are: (i) UNDP; (ii) the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); (iv) FAO and (v) WFP.

¹⁵ A study was commissioned by UNDP in 2012 to look into developing a CCA sector-wide approach (SWAp), but this is not yet in place.

Theme 1: Sustainable and equitable economic growth and food security	UNDP takes the overall coordination role.
Outcome 1.1: Targeted rural households in selected districts are both food-secure and nutrition-secure by 2016.	FAO takes the lead with the participation of the relevant agencies of the United Nations system. FAO and WFP are the active agencies in this outcome. FAO supports increasing production while WFP tries to link the supported farmers to markets to ensure continued incentives. Hence, target communities are willing to improve agricultural productivity.
Outcome 1.2: Women, young people, people with disability and households benefit from decent employment, income generation and pro-poor private sector growth by 2016.	FAO and International Labour Organization (ILO) work together to support these target groups, for instance through Junior Farmer Field Schools (FAO) and working to combat child labour on tobacco estates (ILO).
Outcome 1.3: Targeted population in selected districts benefit from the effective management of the environment, natural resources, climate change and disaster risk by 2016.	UNDP takes the lead with the participation of the relevant agencies of the United Nations system. This outcome area mainly focuses on CCA initiatives, for instance via the World Food Programme African Adaptation Programme (AAP) and other DRR initiatives
Outcome 1.4: Most vulnerable groups are capable of meeting their basic needs and withstanding shocks by 2016.	The World Food Programme takes the lead in responding to emergencies, with the participation of the relevant agencies of the United Nations system. Their DRR mainstreaming project currently implemented via the Programme also falls in this outcome area.

Source: UNDAF Action Plan 2012 – 2016

DRR programming falls under theme 1 of the United Nations Development Assistance Fund (2012 – 2016), which focuses on: “Sustainable and equitable economic growth and food security, in which UNDP takes overall coordination.” Each thematic area in the Fund is further broken down into outcomes where a given agency of the United Nations system takes the lead on each one of the outcomes. This is summarized as shown in the matrix below:

What role does each one of these agencies of the United Nations system play in DRR mainstreaming in Malawi? What tools are used in DRR mainstreaming?

United Nations Development Programme

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has played the most significant role in supporting the Government of Malawi via the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in developing frameworks, strategies and institutional capacities for the effective coordination of DRR activities in the country. As such, UNDP maintains its upstream focus to ensure that the requisite capac-

ities and institutional mechanisms are achieved at both national and district levels while ensuring an impact at the community level. Although direct community level interventions were also proposed in its programmes based on the stakeholders’ recommendations, the overall outcome of UNDP’s programme support still remains its focus on transformational change, which is brought about at various levels with its interventions in policy, regulatory, planning and coordination at national and district level. UNDP is thus not directly involved in the implementation of programmes and projects it initiates and supports, most of which are implemented by government agencies and NGOs, with the Department of Disaster Management Affairs being in charge of overall coordination.

Some of the support worth highlighting that UNDP has provided to the Government of Malawi via the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in recent years is:

- Support in developing the DRM Operational Guidelines to ensure wider

stakeholder involvement in DRM programmes in the country. As indicated above, the DRM Operational Guidelines allocates roles to different stakeholders in disaster risk reduction at all levels, including government ministries and departments, local authorities and civil society. Civil Protection Committees, which were initially established for civil protection (disaster response), were given broader mandates.

- Support in developing the draft National DRM policy, which addresses the challenges that were identified in the National DRR Framework. It has six priority areas, the first of which is “mainstreaming disaster risk management into sustainable development”. This was followed up with support given for revising the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991) so that it reflects current realities.
 - In 2009, UNDP supported the Government of Malawi in commissioning an assessment of the situation to identify challenges and suggest strategies that would lead to the formulation of a DRM policy. The issues were documented in the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework.
 - UNDP has also played a pivotal role in supporting the training of DRR focal points in all key sectors on the city, town and district councils. As a result, they have incorporated DRR into both their development and work plans. But the main challenge remains that of the resources required to implement these plans in an explicit manner. It is worth noting however that the Office of the President and Cabinet has so far approved the advocacy of a budget line, which should result in clear budget lines for disaster risk reduction in the next budget cycle.
- i) It was reported that 15 disaster-prone districts have aligned their

activities and timelines to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy. UNDP has taken advantage of this process to ensure that disaster risk reduction is included in these District Development Plans. Besides, the districts have had awareness training through structured interventions supported by UNDP.

According to this study, the main challenge, however, is the fact that most people are still thinking in response mode. This also explains why emergency response continues to receive more financial support from the donor community than disaster risk reduction. Hence, there is a need to continue raising the awareness of policymakers and the donor community alike so that they begin to appreciate the need for a comprehensive paradigm shift.

World Food Programme

The World Food Programme (WFP) has also over the years shifted from being solely a food emergency and relief organization to one which integrates disaster risk reduction into its programming. Since January 2008, WFP Malawi in collaboration with its NGO partners has been implementing DRR interventions and livelihood protection aimed at reducing the effects of recurring natural disasters and enhancing food security under a protracted relief and recovery operation.

The operation was aimed at:

- Improving livelihood and food security opportunities for the most vulnerable households through the sustainable use of the natural resource base and the creation of a stable enabling environment.
- Reaching households affected by seasonal floods, prolonged dry spells or other sudden disasters with emergency food needs.

The DRR, livelihood and food security activities implemented under Food for Assets supported 93,500 beneficiaries in Balaka, Machinga, Kasungu, Chikwawa, Phalombe and Nsanje districts. In addition, WFP Malawi engaged in a Cash and Food for Livelihoods Pilot Project, which supported 11,100 beneficiary households in Chikwawa and Machinga districts.¹⁶ The food-for-assets and cash-for-assets schemes have significantly improved food security and resilience to shocks in Malawi.

Ideally, the World Food Programme will shift to disaster risk reduction where it is engaging with NGOs to implement initiatives through the District Executive Committees, who guide them in selecting areas within the districts where to implement the activities. In part, this approach draws from lessons learnt in the implementation of the African Adaptation Programme (AAP) where the World Food Programme played a pivotal role. The implementation approach adopted starts with the formation of District DRR Task Force Teams, which are subcommittees of the District Civil Protection Committees. These carry out the planning, mapping of vulnerabilities via seasonal programming analysis to identify the main hazards by season, all done with the active participation of the target communities. This strategy ensures the identification of appropriate interventions to address specific hazards that are experienced in the target districts during each season. The vulnerability analysis and mapping exercise also help to identify gaps not only in skills but also in already existing interventions within the district. This step avoids duplication and enhances harmonization of effort and financial resources to the benefit of the communities. The aim of the approach is to cover the areas targeted in the district more comprehensively. It is believed that such an inclusive approach will enhance impact.

The main challenge pointed out, however, is the fact that some NGOs tend to be fixed to an area with already committed resources. This phenomenon tends to negatively affect harmonization efforts within the district.

The Food and Agriculture Organization

The Food and Agriculture Organization, like other agencies of the United Nations system discussed above, is committed to supporting the Government of Malawi in implementing programmes and projects that aim to build resilience to disaster risks and the effects of climate change. Although FAO is involved in many such initiatives, two of them could be summarized here.

Firstly, FAO has been a key partner in the implementation of DIPECHO project activities since 2010. In particular, it coordinated the implementation of the Food Security DRR project. This project was conceived as a result of the main lesson learned from the DIPECHO1 Project that natural hazards, mainly floods and cyclones, put at risk not only the lives of individuals but also their livelihoods, especially for those based in agriculture. Although DIPECHO 1 interventions were necessary to achieve the principal objective of preparing the communities at risk to better cope with the impacts of natural hazards, primarily through the saving of human lives, these interventions did not respond well to the other pressing concern of the communities: the acute food insecurity brought about by the continuous succession of natural catastrophes such as floods. ECHO therefore made a decision to complement the Second DIPECHO Action Plan by linking DRR-based food security actions: adaptation to new patterns of natural hazards to those of ongoing DIPECHO projects in order to decrease the vulnerability of communities exposed to the risk of floods and cyclones. The participants in the National and Regional DIPECHO Workshop on the evaluation of and lessons learning from the first DIPECHO Action Plan did not only consistently highlight the

¹⁶ WFP Malawi (2009). Cash and Food for Livelihood Pilot Project, October 2008 – May 2009.

need to integrate food security initiatives into disaster risk reduction but identified the pivotal role that FAO could play as regards technical guidance, coordination and the sharing of successful models and lessons learned on food security initiatives linked to DRR activities. This project was implemented in all three target districts of Malawi where DIPECHO partners are operating.

Secondly, FAO has developed a Climate-Smart Agriculture project, which is aimed at supporting initiatives that will build the resilience of communities to impacts of climate change. This project is also supporting the training of students at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Thanks to competitive grants, selected postgraduate students are involved in researching climate-smart agriculture, and this project is still ongoing.

United Nations Children's Fund

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has observed that disasters negatively impact both children's and women's rights, disproportionately affect poor countries, erode development gains and set back progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Disasters thus exacerbate already existing vulnerabilities and inequalities between boys, girls, women and men¹⁷. As disasters are a function of hazard, vulnerability and capacity, they are both a humanitarian and a development concern. UNICEF therefore has an obligation to address disaster risk, as it impedes progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and the realization of children's rights. Strengthening UNICEF's work in disaster risk reduction is part of a wider organizational effort to enhance the effectiveness of the country programme process, and a continued commitment to excellence in humanitarian action. This process includes a set of principles, approaches and specific interventions that cover preparedness, response and early recovery

and so bridge the gap between development and humanitarian programming. The vision for humanitarian action is spelled out in the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. One of the approaches underpinning this vision is emergency risk-informed programming in all country contexts.

Emergency risk-informed programming is a process that lays out steps in the programme cycle to help ensure that regular programming by UNICEF better addresses priority emergency risks threatening the rights of children in a given country through (1) increased prevention, mitigation, and preparedness related to these risks (whether related to natural disasters, social/political conflict and/or health crisis), and (2) improved response and recovery from actual emergencies. Disaster risk reduction is a key component of emergency risk-informed programming and should therefore be integrated accordingly.

UNICEF is therefore working on integrating disaster risk reduction into its programming and thematic areas. The drive by UNICEF toward integrating disaster risk reduction into its country programme is further justified by the fact that its programme support is aligned to national priority areas that are articulated in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy. In view of the fact that the Government of Malawi has embarked on systematically integrating disaster risk reduction into its policies, plans and budgets, it is thus appropriate that its development partners such as UNICEF also adopt similar strategies in the provision of their development support. With the impacts of disasters falling disproportionately on the most vulnerable and the most marginalized, UNICEF has a strong incentive to ensure that disaster risk is minimized by mainstreaming risk reduction measures in its work. At the global level, UNICEF has integrated disaster risk reduction into its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and UNICEF's central policy on how to uphold the rights of chil-

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dren affected by humanitarian crisis. UNICEF is increasing its investment in preparedness and in reducing risk through its response and early recovery work.

In view of the major negative impacts of disasters on socioeconomic growth and development, it has been recognized that disasters need to be mainstreamed into all sectors and all levels of planning. While UNICEF has long recognized the importance of disaster risk reduction, the emphasis has been on preparedness and response. Since 2011, in preparation of its 2012 – 2016 Programme Support Document to Malawi, UNICEF has embarked on explicitly incorporating approaches to reduce risks with more emphasis on prevention and mitigation in line with UNICEF's commitment to the Hyogo Framework¹⁸ at a global level and on the provision of support to the efforts made by the Government of Malawi to meet the commitments stipulated by the Framework.

4.3.2 Main donor agencies who mainstream disaster risk reduction

Several interventions aimed to reduce natural disaster risk are currently being implemented in Malawi in natural resource management and the protection of the environment, forests, water resources, soil and land, energy; land-use planning; agriculture; education; health; food security; livelihoods; and social protection. In Malawi, several donors either acting individually or through partnerships with other donor agencies have in recent years scaled-up their financial and technical support lent to DRR and CCA initiatives in the country. The matrix below presents a detailed summary of the main donors and projects in disaster risk reduction that are currently being implemented or that have recently been implemented in Malawi¹⁹.

It is worth noting that both the United Nations and donor agencies are not actively involved in the implementation of DRR mainstreaming interventions in the country. They mainly play a facilitative role by providing the necessary financial and technical support to the Government of Malawi or by directly providing grants to civil society organizations using various modalities, some of which have been discussed in this report. We could thus classify their involvement as being at two levels. Firstly, upstream financial and technical support is provided to central Government to enable, for example, the establishment of the necessary policy strategies and institutional frameworks, including building the requisite capacities. Almost all the DRR legislative, policy strategies and institutional frameworks were developed with financial and technical support from the agencies of the United Nations system and donor agencies. Secondly, downstream financial and technical support is provided to facilitate implementation of DRR interventions at decentralized levels. Most downstream activities are implemented by civil society organizations individually or via the aforementioned consortiums. However, in all these interventions the institutional structures discussed in this report are used instead of establishing parallel structures. Hence, this also entails working in partnership with government departments at these levels.

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19 The author of the current report was a national consultant for this assignment to the World Bank.

Table 6: Summary of main donors and projects in disaster risk reduction

Major projects and organizations	Indicative budget, years	HFA activity area(s)
World Bank projects		
Community-based rural land development project	\$29.78 million - (2004-2011)	1,3,4
Community-based rural land development project (loan & credit)	\$10 million - (2009- to date: active)	1,3,4
Agricultural sector development	\$47.5 million - (2008-2013)	1,3,4
Agriculture development programme (sustainable land management)	\$37.8 million - (2008-2013)	1,4
Malawi Third Social Action Fund - Adaptable Programme Lending II (Local Development Fund Mechanism)	\$51 million - (2008-2013)	1,4,5
Second National Water Development Project - Additional Financing (Africa Catalytic Growth Fund)	\$25 million - (2008-2011)	1,4
Second National Water Development Project	\$173 million - (2007-2012)	1,3,4
Malawi- Avian Influenza Prevention and Control	\$1 million - (2007-2010)	1,3,4,5
Shire River Basin Management Project	\$20 million - (2012 - 2017)	1,2,3,4,5
Integrated Flood Risk Management Strategy	\$3.9 million - (2012 - 2017)	1,2,3,4,5
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)-funded projects		
Mainstreaming disaster reduction for sustainable poverty reduction: Malawi (GFDRR Track II: Single country focus project)	\$914,000 - (2006 - 2010)	1,2,3,4
Disaster risk management in the sub-Saharan Africa region (GFDRR Track II: Burkina Faso, Comoros, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Seychelles, Swaziland)	\$300,000 - (2007 - to date: active)	1,2,3,4,5
Phase 1 of an activity to support the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (GFDRR Track II: Albania, Armenia, Ecuador, Malawi, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Solomon Islands)	\$200,000 - (2008 - to date: active 2011)	1,3,4,5
Disaster risk management in Africa: Strategic framework-good practice-communication (GFDRR Track II: Burkina Faso, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal)	\$395,000 - (2008 - to date: active)	1,2,3,4,5
GEF Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) project grant requested	\$4 million (2013 - 2017)	1,2
Selected donor projects		
Department for International Development (DFID)-World Bank- Norway Aid-Irish Aid: Community resilience to natural disasters and climate risks	£10 million - (planned: for 4 years)	1,2,3,4,5
DFID/Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department: "Community-based DRR Projects" (via 3 NGOs Christian Aid, Action Aid and Tearfund in partnership with local civil society organizations)	£2.3 million - (2006-2010)	3,4,5
UN (through mainly UNDP, but also WFP/UNICEF/United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHabitat)/FAO/UNRCO): One United Nations disaster risk reduction programme	\$2.7 million (for 2009-2010) (2008 - 2011)	1,3,4,5
UNDP-United Nations Environment Programme Poverty and Environment Initiative - Phase I	US\$ 2.7 million - (2008-2010)	1,3,4
World Bank/Government of Malawi/International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD): Irrigation, Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Development Project	\$52.5 million - 2006-2012	1,3,4,5
GEF/ Ministry of Lands: Capacity-Building for Soil and Land Management in Shire River Basin (23,000 sq. km)	US \$11,770,750 - (2009-2013)	1,3,4
DFID: Integrated Food Security Programme	\$15.4 million - (2003-2010)	3,4
African Development Fund (AFD): Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project	\$26.44 million - (2006-2014)	3,4

Major projects and organizations	Indicative budget, years	HFA activity area(s)
European Union: Improved Forest Management for Sustainable Livelihoods Programme	\$13.21 million - (2005-2012)	3,4
DFID (via NGOs: Evangelical Association of Malawi / Tearfund UK): Food Security and Community Based Disaster Risk Mitigation Project	\$2.55 million - (2006-2010)	3,4,5
African Development Fund: Rural Income Enhancement Project	\$20.77 million - (2000-2011)	3,4
DFID (via NGOs: River of Life Evangelical Church / Tear Fund UK) Community-Based Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness Project	\$431,580 - (2006-2010)	3,4,5
Hunger Project Globe: Sustainable Livelihood Security Project	\$5.72 million - (1999-2010)	3,4
European Union: Income Generating Public Works Programme	\$22.77 million - (2005-2011)	3,4
Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid/CADECOM: Disaster Risk Management Project	\$1.47 million - (2008-2010)	3,4,5
World Bank, AfDB, FAO, Italy, Belgium, Norway: National Programme for Food Security	\$ 363.9 million - (2005-2015)	1,3,4
AfDB: Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project	\$25 million - (2007-2013)	1,3,4
IFAD: Rural Livelihoods and Economic Enhancement Programme	\$16.8 million - (2008-2014)	1,3,4
European Union: Farm Income Diversification Programme	\$20 million - (2005-2011)	3,4
Government of Malawi/International Comparison Programme: Integrated Water and Rural Agricultural Credit (pipeline project)	US\$5.29 million - (2009-2014)	1,3,4
AfDB /GEF/LDCF: Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (pipeline project)	US\$24.3 million - (2009-2015)	1,3,4,5
DIPECHO (via NGOs): DIPECHO's support to Disaster Risk Reduction – Phase 2	.. - (2010-2011)	1,2,3,4,5
International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)/International Committee of the Red Cross/Finnish Red Cross: Disaster Management programme	\$ 1,38 million - (2009-2010)	1,3,4,5
WFP: Protracted Relief and Recovery 105860: Assistance to food-insecure people suffering from the effects of natural disasters and HIV and AIDS	\$118 million - (2008-2010)	4,5
DFID (via NGOs): Disaster Risk Reduction Project design	£125,000 - (2009- to date: active)	-
DFID (via NGOs and multilateral organizations): DFID Malawi Climate Change Programme	£300,000 - (2009-2011)	3,4
DFID (via NGOs and emergency aid): Support for victims of storms and floods	£1.2 million - (2008- to date: active)	5
DFID: Support to MVAC – Phase II	£400,520 - (2007- to date: active)	2
USAID-OFDA/IFRC/WMO: Zambezi River Basin Initiative project (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe)	\$1 million (FY 2009) –to date: active	3,4
USAID-OFDA/WMO/IFRC: Zambezi River Flood Early Warning and Mitigation project (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe)	\$451,000 (FY 2009) –to date: active	1,2,3,4,5
USAID/CARE: Drought Mitigation through Irrigation Promotion and Conservation Agriculture Extension Project	\$1.51 million (FY 2009) - (2009- to date: active)	5
USAID-Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA): Technical Support for Vulnerability Assessment Committees in Southern Africa, via USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (Southern African countries)	\$698,656 (FY 2009) –to date: active	1,2,5
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)/USAID/Total Land Care: Management adaptation for climate change projects in Chia Lagoon in Nkhotakota district (integrated watershed management project)	\$5 million? - (2008-2012)	3,4
NORAD/Leadership for Environment and Development and World Fish Centre: Lake Chilwa Basin Project (Integrated Watershed Management Project)	\$5.2 million? (2009-2013)	3,4
DFID: Enhancing Community Resilience Programme	£22 million (2011 – 2016)	1,3,4
UNDP DRM programme support	\$5.5 million (2012 – 2016)	1,2,3,4,5

Source: World Bank Country Note (2010) and updated from other sources

5. Good practices, success factors and lessons learned

The section presents an account of good practices, success factors and lessons learned in mainstreaming DRR and CCA measures. In view of the fact that most DRR mainstreaming activities are implemented by civil society organizations, the good practices described in this report have mainly been derived from their work. The assessment reviewed a few civil society organizations' project reports and various documents to analyse good practices and success factors. The identification and analysis of good practices and success factors were also made with reference to indicators measuring progress of the Hyogo Framework for Action and 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community: a Guidance Note' (Twigg, 2009).

Mainstreaming and implementing DRR measures is a process, not just a one-off activity. The Hyogo Framework and 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community' documents provide good reference points to measure the success in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into humanitarian and development programmes. Indicators measuring progress on the Hyogo Framework provide a means to track progress on disaster risk reduction and on the implementation of the Framework. 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community' shows what a 'disaster-resilient community' might mean by setting out the many dif-

ferent elements of resilience. It provides some ideas about how to progress towards integrating disaster risk reduction into policies and development planning. This guidance note has five thematic areas based on the five priority areas of the Hyogo Framework. Both these documents provide a benchmark for achieving the Hyogo Framework. The two documents are therefore very important for development practitioners to understand so that they can employ suitable interventions and approaches to achieve the intended goal.

The identification and analysis of good practices and success factors were made with reference to indicators measuring progress of the Hyogo Framework for Action and 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community'. If the Hyogo Framework is used as yardstick for achieving DRR mainstreaming, it will be easy to identify good practices because interventions that will contribute to the achievement of the indicators can be considered as good practices. The matrix below presents an account of the Hyogo Framework and the thematic areas of the 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community' to guide the identification and analysis of good practices in and success factors for community-based disaster risk reduction.

5.1 Description of community-based DRR mainstreaming and implementation: Good practices and success factors

5.1.1 HFA thematic area 1: Governance

Intervention/practice	Description and success factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
<p>Capacity-building of Civil Protection Committees in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation</p>	<p>Training workshops are held to educate Civil Protection Committees in DRR and CCA-related work. Civil Protection Committees are mandated in the national disaster management structure, which is coordinated by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs to oversee disaster risk management work at district, traditional area and village level. Unfortunately, due to resource limitations, district councils have had difficulties in training these Committees so much so that most across the country have been instituted but not trained to comprehend the scope of their work. The training workshops carried out by civil society organizations in partnership with District Councils have therefore helped some of these structures to gain knowledge of disaster risk management, climate change adaptation and the PADR tool, and to also understand their responsibilities. In order to be more effective, Committee members are involved in the process of assessing training needs so that training workshops are tailor-made. In order to ensure sustainability, members at district level are provided with skills as trainers and they then train those at Traditional Area level, who in turn train those at village level. This approach helps to ensure the effective transfer of knowledge and skills. In most districts i.e. Chikwawa, Mwanza, Nsanje, Salima, Dedza, Phalombe where civil society organizations have worked with District Councils to carry out these training programs, Civil Protection Committee members have hailed the strategy, as they are helped to gain confidence, knowledge and skills to implement DRR mainstreaming work in their respective communities.</p>	<p>Impact: The initiative builds confidence in Civil Protection Committees, and members feel empowered to mainstream risk reduction into emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes. A Village Civil Protection Committee in a Chikwawa district village called Tizola, which received training from the Evangelical Association of Malawi in 2009, was called upon by health officials to help distribute free mosquito nets to protect people from malaria in their area. The Civil Protection Committee advised the officials not to distribute the nets “freely” but to ask the beneficiary households to construct a pit latrine if they did not own one already, before first receiving the net. Tizola is one of the areas where people are at risk from health hazards due to poor households’ hygiene practices and open defecation. Government officials were surprised to note the change of mindset because people in the area were used to handouts. This initiative helped the health sector achieve 85 per cent of households with a toilet from a baseline of 45 per cent. Committee members say that the DRR and PADR training widened their understanding and that they are now able to assess their vulnerability and take the opportunity to incorporate risk reduction measures at any opportune moment.</p> <p>Appropriateness for good practice: Trained Civil Protection Committees come up with their own Community Action Plans with suitable measures to reduce risks, and this is helping to increase ownership. District Councils’ comparative studies show that trained Civil Protection Committees are engaged in DRR mainstreaming across the DRM cycle more than Committees who have not been trained to understand the scope of their work well. This step is one of the most effective ways to promote DRR mainstreaming governance at grassroots level. The involvement of multisectors in the process provides a variety of different views on DRR mainstreaming. Civil Protection Committees are comprised of different sectors at district, area and village level. The training of Civil Protection Committees ensures knowledgeable and resourceful structures within the national DRR institutional framework. Effective in building resilience and sustainability when trained, Civil Protection Committees will continue to initiate risk reduction work beyond the project’s life span.</p>

5.1.2 HFA thematic area # 2: Risk assessment

Intervention/practice	Description and success factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
<p>Village-level PADR</p>	<p>PVCA is used as a strategic tool to enter a community. Trained Civil Protection Committees use this tool to help targeted communities take serious stock of the impact of natural and weather-related hazards on their welfare and attempt to identify vulnerability factors contributing to the cause of these hazards. The capacity assessment helps them to consider locally available resources that can be harnessed to address vulnerability factors. The tool promotes the involvement of every member of the community, irrespective of class, social status, race, gender and creed. The process has helped many vulnerable communities embrace the appreciative enquiry rather than the problem-based approach in the development of suitable disaster risk reduction projects. Trained Village Civil Protection Committees now conduct village PADR processes at regular intervals and keep records for future reference. Factors contributing to the success of the initiative include among other important issues: the involvement of different members at community level via focus group discussions and key informant interviews where different community opinion leaders are involved. In addition, the process is facilitated by trained Civil Protection Committees, resulting in the process of being 'owned' by community members than would be the case if dominated by external project facilitators.</p>	<p>Impact</p> <p>The process is helping community leaders and members identify comprehensive vulnerability factors and discuss suitable disaster risk reduction strategies. Communities are becoming more proactive in disaster management activities than just depending on external help during disaster response times. A good example is the community of Fombe in Chikwawa district, which after going through a PADR process supported by Eagles Relief and Development came to realize that flooding problems in their area were largely due to environmental degradation induced by rampant deforestation. They therefore planned to engage in comprehensive reforestation work and take the initiative to construct a dyke to protect themselves from floodwaters.</p> <p>Appropriateness for good practice:</p> <p>PADR processes are helping vulnerable communities plan for and 'own' risk reduction interventions. It is easy for communities to adopt the process. PADR or PVCA processes promote the involvement of different stakeholders and interest groups at community level, thereby ensuring the active participation of all groups in implementing DRR interventions.</p> <p>The PADR process also considers social, economic and environmental dimensions as to how these parameters can be strengthened in order to build resilience. The process helps to translate policy and strategies into practical interventions at community level, thereby ensuring tangible results on the ground. It is easy to replicate the process and ensure sustainability because it involves community facilitators and promotes the use of locally available resources to implement some of the suitable risk reduction measures planned.</p>

5.1.3 HFA thematic area 3: Knowledge and education

Intervention/practice	Description and success factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
<p>DRR training in schools</p>	<p>The education sector has a pivotal role to play to ensure effective community education and awareness in DRR mainstreaming work. Students of all ages can actively study and participate in school safety measures, and effectively contribute to community efforts towards disaster risk reduction. While efforts are made at policy level by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs and by civil society organization networks to lobby for the incorporation of disaster risk reduction into school curricula, on the ground NGOs are working with district education and zone offices to engage teachers and learners in DRR awareness-raising and mainstreaming. Students are participating via DRR clubs and DRR sports and quiz competitions. DRR-related games were also developed to help students interact and learn more about disaster risk reduction from games. This strategy is contributing to the creation of both a culture of safety and a proactive generation. Integrating disaster risk reduction into schools will help raise awareness and provide a better understanding of disaster risk reduction for children, teachers and communities. The initiative by civil society organizations is helping to lay the foundation for disaster risk reduction in schools, as the Department of Disaster Management Affairs is working with the Malawi Institute of Education to incorporate disaster risk reduction into school curricula.</p>	<p>Impact: Primarily, the initiative is helping promote the involvement of the education sector in DRM and CCA-related work at community level, thereby promoting effective community awareness and education in DRR mainstreaming work. In addition, the process is providing opportunities to civil society organizations for evidence-based advocacy work for the inclusion of DRR and CCA-related work into school curricula.</p> <p>Appropriateness for a good practice: The forming of school clubs about disaster risk reduction promotes ownership of initiatives by schools, teachers and learners. This process provides ways to translate some DRR-related policies and strategies into practical activities at school level, thereby ensuring long-lasting results, as schools are actively participating in DRR-related activities such as reforestation and community awareness about disaster risk reduction. A well-informed community can contribute to the effective implementation of disaster risk reduction activities, thereby enhancing resilience. Sustainability of school-based DRR work is easy because it is cheaper and thrives on the active participation of teachers and students.</p>

5.1.4 HFA thematic area 4: Risk management and vulnerability reduction

Intervention/practice	Description and success factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
Small-scale irrigation farming	<p>Civil society organizations working in partnership with government agriculture extension service providers are providing technical and resource support to communities at risk of drought and flood-induced food insecurity in order to engage in small-scale irrigation. This strategy is helping the communities to avert acute food shortages at household level in times of failed harvests when caused by dry spells and wash-aways of crop fields by floods. Factors contributing to the success of this initiative include collaborative efforts by stakeholders and the capacity-building of participating households. People are introduced to good farming technologies, and village facilitators or lead farmers are trained to spearhead the wider adoption of good farming practices at irrigation sites.</p>	<p>Impact: Perennial food insecurity induced by dry spells and flooding is historically known in vulnerable households that are actively and effectively engaged in small-scale irrigation farming. This initiative provides them with the opportunity to plant twice a year, thereby increasing food production.</p> <p>Appropriateness for good practice: Participating stakeholders, households and agriculture extension service providers are actively involved and 'own' the initiative. Small-scale irrigation farming by rural subsistence farming families has helped increase the acreage of land being irrigated in the country as evidenced by statistics at district and national agriculture offices. This has multiple effects, as the initiative provides opportunities to ensure direct food production for household consumption and the sale of surplus to generate income for other socioamenities. The challenge, however, is how to come up with strategies to reduce negative environmental consequences because, in most cases, treadle pumps are used to draw water from streams and redesigned to be placed within the buffer zone along the riverbank. The riverbank is therefore exposed to degradation. The initiative provides opportunities to translate different agricultural strategies into tangible results on the ground. Small-scale irrigation using simple equipment and gravity-fed irrigation where applicable is easy to replicate and sustain.</p>

Intervention/practice	Description and success factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
<p>3. VSLA</p>	<p>Commonly known as the ‘village bank’, VSLAs provide villagers with the opportunity to cultivate a savings culture and to access affordable loans in order to engage in profitable nonfarm and farm income-generating activities. One of the socioeconomic vulnerability factors for most households in disaster-prone areas is that they are overly dependent solely on a single means of livelihood, for instance agriculture, which ironically is susceptible to natural hazards and the changing climate. With any weather-related disaster, crop production is compromised and income generation is affected at the household level. Affected villagers cannot engage in other off-farm income-generating activities because they do not have the start-up capital and are not able to borrow from the village loan sharks, which is another dynamic pressure increasing their vulnerability owing to loan sharks’ prohibitive interest rates. The concept of VSLAs is therefore a welcome idea. Civil society organizations are championing the initiative, working in partnership with District Councils, government community development facilitators and community people. One of the success factors is that the initiative does not use any external start-up capital but is funded by the members themselves.</p>	<p>Impact VSLAs are helping the vulnerable to improve their savings and to access affordable loans to engage in other off-farm microbusiness initiatives. The Ministry of Economic Planning and Development has data on what different players are doing in VSLA-related work with vulnerable communities. The initiative has huge potential to improve the socioeconomic welfare of vulnerable farming families and to enhance their resilience to natural hazards and the effects of the changing climate.</p> <p>Appropriateness for good practice: Participating stakeholders, households and community development facilitators, non-traditional DRR groups are actively involved and ‘own’ the initiative. There are multiple effects as, the initiative provides opportunities to ensure diversified means of livelihoods and to increase capacity to prepare for and deal with the impact of disaster-induced food insecurity and property loss. The initiative has the potential to help government machinery translate concepts about economic growth into tangible results on the ground. It is easy to replicate and sustain because it requires no external financial injection except for capacity-building in related procedures and responsibilities. The system also trains village agents who are commissioned to make more people aware and establish more groups of between 20 and 25 people.</p>

Intervention/practice	Description and success factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
<p>4.DRR awareness—raising for local building contractors and artisans in adaptive infrastructure</p>	<p>Raising the awareness of local artisans and building contractors about disaster risk reduction and adaptive infrastructure is one of the most effective ways to promote DRR mainstreaming into the building sector. Civil society organizations (like the Evangelical Association of Malawi and Christian Aid in the Chikwawa district) are working in collaboration with the District Department of Works and UN-Habitat to raise the awareness of local building contractors and artisans as regards disaster risk reduction and adaptive infrastructure. It is a commendable initiative considering that most local artisans venture into building business without formal training and are not conversant with the principles of building better. The initiative promotes the use of locally available materials to build houses that can withstand the impact of floods, strong winds, earthquake and fires following established building codes. The training provides local building artisans and contractors with significant expertise and skills and they now feel knowledgeable about their trade and how best to use their expertise to reduce infrastructure-related disaster risks. One of the success factors is that the initiative promotes the use of locally available materials to construct adaptive structures. It is also an incentive to local artisans, as they improve their credentials to be more marketable.</p>	<p>Impact</p> <p>The Evangelical Association of Malawi piloted the initiative where over 17 local building contractors and 65 local builders and artisans were introduced to DRR and adaptive infrastructure in 2012 by way of a technical and practical training workshop. Artisans appreciated the training because it opened their eyes to construction that is done from a DRR perspective. They formed their own association and are now advising their clients how to build better. Some have even gone on to build their second homes better, using locally available resources and adhering to building principles and codes learnt during the workshop.</p> <p>Appropriateness for good practice:</p> <p>The initiative brings together members of the community, government departments (Ministry of Works), UN-Habitat and local artisans, a non-traditional DRR group. There are multiple benefits: building the capacity of local artisans and investing in the construction of adaptive structures for the safety of people in the community. Most of these artisans are hired to build houses for people, or schools, churches or mosques and their involvement in DRR-related building will ensure the safety of people in flood, earthquake and storm-prone areas. The initiative promotes collaborative efforts by government departments within the national institutional DRR environment and in the private sector. It is easy to replicate and sustain because of the training provided and the use of locally available building materials to encourage a culture of safety and resilience.</p>

5.1.5 HFA thematic area 5: Disaster preparedness and response

Intervention/Practice	Description and Success Factors	Impact and appropriateness of practice
<p>Community-Based and People-Centred Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (CBFFEWS)</p>	<p>The active participation of vulnerable communities is paramount to the effective planning and implementation of any disaster risk reduction intervention. The CBFFEWS provides the opportunity to ensure that targeted communities at risk of flooding take an active role in the gathering and analysis of information on the timely issuance of early warning messages of impending flooding. The initiative which uses hydrometric scales, raingauges and communication equipment such as megaphones and cell phones provides an opportunity for a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down one, as is generally the case of the current government initiative, which is beset by the intermittent issuance of warning messages due to a number of critical logistical problems. Where CBFFEWS was established, communities have hailed the initiative, as it provides them with the opportunity to actively take part in the process and ensure timely issuance of warning messages to save lives and property in times of flooding. The involvement of communities in the identification of strategic places for hydrometric scales and raingauges, the capacity-building of community volunteer gauge readers and first respondents contributes to the success of the initiative. The Evangelical Association of Malawi and Christian Aid in partnership with Chikwawa district, the Water Department and the Department of Meteorological Services piloted a community-based and people-centred flood early warning system in 2008-2009. It was the first of its kind at community level in the country. Communities in different areas and districts along rivers that usually flood are connected by the system to ensure the relay of important of trigger events such as rainfall patterns.</p>	<p>Impact</p> <p>The CBFFEWS was tested in a real-time situation and found to be very instrumental in issuing timely warning messages. In early April 2009, efficient and effective coordination between Civil Protection Committees along Mwanza river led to the prevention of loss of lives and livestock down river in Chikwawa district. People were warned in time to avoid the riverbank. It would have been another story altogether if the huge volumes of water that flowed downriver after some hours had encountered people and livestock near or on the banks of the river. In order to ensure the scaling-up of the initiative to other flood-prone areas and linking the system to the national early warning system, a consultative meeting was held with the Departments of Water Resources and Climate Change and the Meteorological Services to lobby Government to incorporate the community-based component into the national early warning system and scale up the initiative to other flood-prone areas. In 2013, the Department of Water Resources developed National Guidelines for Community-Based Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (CBFFEWS), linking both the top-down and bottom-up approaches to be shared with all stakeholders involved in flood risk.</p> <p>Appropriateness for good practice: Participation of all stakeholders – both traditional and non-traditional DRR groups, – vulnerable communities, households, Civil Protection Committees, the Water Department, the Department of Meteorological Services and the District Council.</p> <p>There are multiple benefits: flood forecasting and drought forecasting, increasing community preparedness and resilience to weather-related natural hazards. The initiative promotes collaborative efforts by government departments within the national institutional DRR framework led by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs and also provides an opportunity to link government policies and strategies with community-owned and managed interventions, thereby fostering functional cooperation for tangible results on the ground. It is easy to replicate and sustain because government structures are already involved. What was missing was active community participation, which also contributes to 'ownership' of the equipment and system, thereby minimizing community level vandalism.</p>

5.2 Lessons learned

Documentation on the sharing of lessons learnt among stakeholders has been one of the key elements arising from the consultation of various NGOs on DRR issues in the country. Some of the key lessons learnt through their projects have been summarized below.

- The VSLA is a strong model for building both the resilience of communities and the accumulation of their household assets.
- Since the VSLA strengthened the groups' bonds of cohesion, confidence and trust among its members have increased proportionately. The VSLA is a powerful mechanism for implementing and promoting many other development initiatives, including DRR activities.
- The VSLA model is a very good graduation model for social protection tools such as cash transfers. For example, cash transfer beneficiaries would be good candidates for VSLAs, as they have some cash income that they could use to buy shares in the groups.
- The implementation of DRR activities requires a regular flow of funding, particularly during the rainy season. DRR activities are mostly seasonal projects. As a result, any loss of time due to the irregular flow of funding arising from bureaucratic funding procedures means that some DRR activities can only be carried out in the following year.
- Monitoring: Monitoring is a key tool for understanding the deviation of activities throughout project cycles. Monitoring can be strengthened if incorporated within the project cycle. Civil Protection Committees should be part of the process in all these phases. This strategy can help these structures understand the need for monitoring and the use of data that is collected to improve the project.
- All community-based projects including DRR projects require there to be good communication and transparency within communities throughout the project cycle. If transparency and good communication exist at the very start of the programmes or projects, this situation creates a good rapport between communities and the implementing organizations, thereby reducing any suspicions and boosting trust and coordination.
- The design and implementation of small-scale flood mitigation works require multidisciplinary teams so that all the necessary technical aspects are taken into account. This includes a thorough review of the funds available to avoid partial implementation or the construction of structures, which can sometimes create even more serious problems than previously. Basically, it has been learnt that flood mitigation structures are not cheap and require adequate budgetary support to ensure that once the work is started, they can and will be completed.
- DRR initiatives aimed at reinforcing riverbanks or minimizing damage caused by water require the involvement of all the communities living along the catchment area. The implementation of such initiatives following administrative boundaries such as Traditional Authorities and district boundaries means that some communities whose participation is crucial to achieving the necessary impact with the interventions are left out.
- Livestock pass-on schemes are effective strategies for building self-reliance and developing community mutual accountability. This report revealed that commu-

nity-regulated pass-on arrangements on launching project initiatives such as live-stock are very effective and have a significant multiplier effect. This is mainly due to the fact that the next line of beneficiaries is always waiting to receive the animals (offspring) or eggs in the case of chickens. As a result, the initial beneficiaries should be more accountable, transparent and ensure the proper management of the animals in order to prevent their death. Accountability is also enhanced by the fact that the livestock pass-on scheme involves a special ceremony, which the next generations of beneficiaries and the community leadership attend. Such a transparent system ensures faithful beneficiary involvement in project activities, limiting-profiteering behaviour.

5.3 Challenges

- This section looks at challenges encountered by government agencies and civil society organizations to effectively plan for and implement the systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes and into different development agendas. In order to establish critical and relevant challenges, the assessment consulted a few active DRM practitioners, reviewed documentation and referenced the 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community' document.
- 'Characteristics of a Disaster-Resilient Community: a Guidance Note' (2009) identifies the need to establish enabling environments that should be there to ensure effective planning and implementation of DRR mainstreaming initiatives for each of the HFA priority areas and as a whole. The enabling environments presented in the guidance note provided the assessment with the opportunity to carry out a comparative analysis with the data gathered from DRR and development workers and observations of unfolding developments in the national DRM sector.
- The challenges to effective implementation of DRR mainstreaming measures are presented in the table below. They are the contrary of the desired enabling environments presented in the Guidance Note but are relevant to the situation in Malawi, compared with the data collected and current national DRR initiatives spear-headed by the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs. They are related mostly to policy change and the institutionalization of relevant operational mechanisms. It is important to note that the Department of Disaster Management Affairs is already in the process of finalizing the development and approval of the first ever National DRM Policy and a review of the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991).

Challenges to DRR mainstreaming

HFA priority areas/thematic areas	HFA indicators of progress	Challenges affecting achievement on column 2
<p>Ensure that disaster risk reduction is both a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation</p> <p>(governance)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National institutional and legal frameworks for disaster risk reduction exist with decentralized responsibilities and capacities at all levels. Dedicated and adequate resources are available particularly from development partners to implement disaster risk reduction plans at all administrative levels. Community participation and decentralization are ensured by the delegation of authority and resources to local levels. A national multisectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is launched and now functional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of a National DRM policy, strategy and implementation plan, with clear vision, priorities, targets and benchmarks Inadequate coordination of local government DRR-related policies, strategies and implementation plans and resource mechanisms Poor local enforcement of land-use regulations, building codes and other laws and regulations relating to DRR. Delay in passing the National DRM Policy is among others exacerbating these problems.
<p>Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning systems.</p> <p>(Risk assessment)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and local risk assessments based on hazard and vulnerability data are available and include risk assessments for key sectors. Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities. Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities. National and local risk assessments take account of regional and transboundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard assessments, risk assessments and VCA not mandated in public policy, legislation, with standards for preparation, publication, and revision. No national standardized or common tools for hazard, risk and VCA
<p>Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels</p> <p>(Knowledge and education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems.) School curricula, education material and relevant trainings include risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices. Research methods and tools for multirisk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened. Country-wide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities. A Disaster Risk Management Handbook launched and now available for practitioners, communities, educators and learners in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of appropriate education and training programmes for planners and field practitioners in DRR/DRM and development sectors designed and implemented at national, regional, local levels Inadequate training resources (technical, financial, material, human) made available by the Government, emergency services, NGOs to support local-level DRR. Inadequate or lack of national and subnational research capacity in hazards, risk and disaster studies (in specialist institutions or within other institutions), with adequate funding for ongoing research

HFA priority areas/thematic areas	HFA indicators of progress	Challenges affecting achievement on column 2
<p>Reduce the underlying risk factors.</p> <p>(Risk management and vulnerability reduction)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment-related policies and plans, including for land use, natural resource management and climate change adaptation. • Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk. • Economic and productive sectoral policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities. • Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction components, including enforcement of building codes. • • Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes. • Procedures are in place to assess disaster risk impacts of all major development projects, especially infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate local government experts and extension workers available to work with communities on long-term environmental management and renewal. • Lack of policy and operational interface between environmental management and risk reduction policies and planning. • Inadequate financial and other incentives provided to reduce dependence on unsafe or hazardous vulnerable livelihood activities. • Lack of 'hardware' approach to disaster mitigation accompanied by 'software' dimension of education, skills training, etc.
<p>Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.</p> <p>(Disaster preparedness and response)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster management, with a disaster risk reduction perspective in place • Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster response programmes. • Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to enable effective response and recovery when required. • Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during disasters and to undertake post-event reviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate national and local disaster management capacities (technical, institutional, financial) for supporting community-level disaster preparedness/response activity. • Lack of efficient district, regional and national community-based early warning system in place, involving all levels of government and civil society, based on sound scientific information, risk knowledge, communicating and warning dissemination and community response capacity. • Lack of emergency contingency funds and stocks at local level that can be made available quickly to those in need, with established procedures for releasing them.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

Malawi is exposed to a number of natural and human-induced hazards, most of which can occur in all 28 districts of the country. Of these 28 districts, 15 are classified as disaster-prone based on historical data and the climate of the districts. Droughts and floods are by far the most important hazards both in terms of their frequency of occurrence and their impacts on livelihoods and the economy as a whole. The frequency and severity of these hazards have intensified during the past two decades.

Disasters undermine government efforts towards achieving economic growth and poverty reduction. In order to address the root causes of disasters, mitigate their impacts and develop a resilient society, the Government of Malawi has undertaken a number of measures aimed at mainstreaming effective disaster risk reduction. Among such measures are: the development of the draft NDRM policy, Operational Guidelines for Mainstreaming DRR, and a draft DRM Bill. District Disaster Risk Reduction Officers have been recruited and deployed in 14 of the most disaster-prone districts. Focal point officers in line ministries and departments have been established and trained to ensure effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into sector plans and budgets. A DRM National Platform has been established and launched.

Limited progress has been made in implementing DRR measures due to the delay in the establishment of a budget line for disaster risk reduction in the national budget to fund sector and district activities. DRR interventions have largely been imple-

mented by civil society organizations with funding mainly from the United Nations and donor agencies. The Office of the President and Cabinet has recently approved the budget line, which is expected to contribute towards enhanced DRR mainstreaming and implementation.

The work of civil society organizations in disaster risk reduction has strengthened community disaster preparedness and resilience in areas such as food security, environmental management, income generation, and livelihood diversification and development. Their work has also contributed to the national review and realignment of DRR and climate change-related policies and strategy papers. Notwithstanding their success in implementing DRR measures at community level, most civil society organizations have yet to fully incorporate disaster risk reduction into relief and development policy and practice so that it becomes normal practice that is fully institutionalized within an agency's relief and development agenda. Although the practical work being done on the ground is to some extent lacking policy and strategic guidance, it is important that precept precedes practice. Owing to a lack of clear policies and strategies, it is possible for some of the DRR interventions implemented to help communities build resilience while, at the same time, increasing vulnerability or even creating future disaster risks.

Malawi has recorded a number of good practices in DRR mainstreaming and implementation that are replicable and scalable. However, a number of challenges faced by DRR mainstreaming and implementation also need to be addressed. These challenges include: poor local enforcement of land use regulations; building codes and other

laws and regulations relating to DRR; hazard assessments, risk assessments and VCAs are not mandated in public policy and legislation, and standards for the preparation, publication and revision of such legislation are lacking; financial and other incentives to reduce dependence on unsafe or hazard-vulnerable livelihood activities are inadequate.

6.2 Recommendations to enhance the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in Malawi

With reference to the key challenges, gaps or factors restraining effective DRR mainstreaming in the development agendas within the framework of national development strategies, plans and programmes, the following way forward is recommended to enhance DRR mainstreaming and implementation in Malawi:

- i) The Department of Disaster Management Affairs should urgently follow up and ensure that the draft DRR Policy document is channelled through and approved at all relevant levels of Government so that it can become effective and operationalized to enhance DRR mainstreaming and coordination.
- ii) Following approval by the Office of the President and Cabinet for the DRR budget line to be incorporated into the national budget, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs should ensure that budget lines for DRR are incorporated within all relevant ministries and departments including in town and district councils. This is an opportunity to implement the DRR plans, which have been supported only by donors to date.

- iii) The planning and budgeting capacity of all DRR focal points should be strengthened to enable them identify, prioritize and develop budgets for DRR interventions. This should be accompanied by the development of guidelines for DRR mainstreaming and budgeting at both sector and local government level.
- iv) Baseline studies and assessments should be carried out to establish benchmarks, including gaps in and priorities for mainstreaming DRR in key and high-risk social, economic and environmental sectors.

6.3 Recommendations for enhanced DRR mainstreaming in the subregion

This report is also intended, among other things, to serve as an input to preparing the subregional assessment report. On the basis of this study's findings, the following are thus recommended for enhanced DRR mainstreaming in the subregion.

- i) Subregional and national level training (training of trainers) on DRR mainstreaming should be carried out to create awareness and build a critical mass of cross-sectoral experts to promote the mainstreaming of DRR into sector policies, plans and programmes. This should be informed by a capacity needs assessment
- ii) DRR focal points or liaison units should be established within priority SADC departments, national sector ministries and agencies to facilitate DRR mainstreaming into subregional and national development frameworks
- iii) Subregional and national guidelines for DRR mainstreaming should be

developed and disseminated. This should include guidelines for the budgeting process in all relevant sectors.

- iv) The documentation and dissemination of tools, methodologies and good practices on DRR mainstreaming should be enhanced to enable learning and support DRR mainstreaming by sector ministries and agencies. The SADC secretariat should facilitate a cross-country sharing of experiences.

- v) A SADC plan of action on DRR mainstreaming as part of the broader SADC DRR Plan of Action should be developed, supported and implemented to enhance capacity of States members in DRR mainstreaming and implementation.

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Annex 2: Frameworks for understanding disaster risk reduction and mainstreaming into development processes

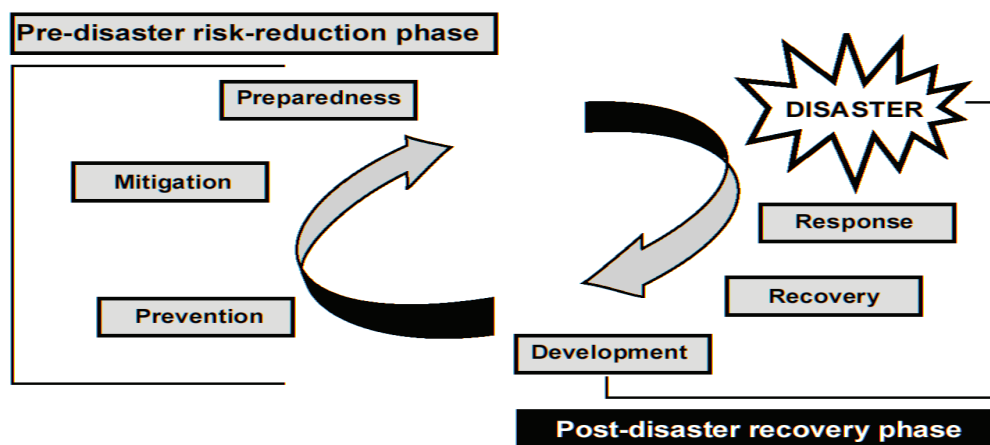
1 Disaster risk reduction cycle

It is important to understand that the DRR concept is not just as an activity that can be implemented within or after each of the phases of the disaster cycle as presented in figure 1 below. It is an overarching principle that must be applied around the disaster cycle, with the main objective being to break the vicious cycle of disasters. The main disadvantage with the disaster cycle is that it suggests a linear and chronological sequence of activities and, at times, disaster risk reduction is considered as one of those activities. In practice, disaster risk reduction should be integrated into all parts of the cycle, beginning with the emergency response. As shown in the figure below, disaster risk reduction should be an integral part of both the pre- and post-disaster phases in the cycle. If disaster risk reduction is delayed until later (i.e. prevention and mitigation), then opportunities for reducing future risk may be lost and the

vulnerabilities, which existed before the disaster, may already have been rebuilt. Good disaster risk reduction will break the cycle by empowering the community to cope with future hazards.

It is therefore important for players in Malawi to fully integrate or to mainstream disaster risk reduction into their programmes and plans, essentially requiring a paradigm shift from emphasizing only preparedness and response to focusing more on prevention and mitigation activities. The DRR concept is supposed to be integrated into all the phases. The planning and implementation of interventions at each of the phases must consider risk reduction approaches than just doing “business as usual”. DRR thinking sees disasters as complex problems demanding a collective response from different disciplinary and institutional groups – in other words, partnerships. This is an important consideration because individual organizations will have to decide where to focus

Figure 10: Disaster cycle



Source: Holloway, 2003

their own efforts and how to work with partners to ensure that other aspects of resilience are addressed. However, the DRR concept or principle should be applied at each level or stage, else even good humanitarian operations if not planned well might bring about negative environmental consequences and create new risks for vulnerable people.

Conference on Disaster Reduction (Japan 2005) underscored the need for and identified ways of building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

To recap, the Hyogo Framework states as its expected outcome: “A substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of persons, communities and countries” by 2015.

The disaster risk reduction framework is composed of the following fields of action:

- Risk awareness and assessment, including hazard, vulnerability and capacity analysis
- Knowledge development, including education, training, research and information
- Public commitment and institutional frameworks, including organizational, policy, legislation and community action
- Application of measures, including environmental management, land use and urban planning, protection of critical facilities, application of science and technology, partnership and networking and financial instruments
- Early warning systems, including forecasting, dissemination of warnings, preparedness measures and reaction capacities

2 Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015

The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 was a key document that emerged from the UNISDR conference on reducing disaster risks, which was held in Kobe, Japan in January 2005. In 2005, the 168 countries that endorsed the Hyogo Framework agreed to achieve by 2015 “a substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of persons, communities and countries”. The Framework has been determinant in strengthening and guiding international cooperation efforts, in generating the political momentum necessary to ensure that disaster risk reduction is used as a foundation for sound national and international development agendas and in giving a common language and a framework of critical actions to follow, to which Governments have clearly responded. The framework constitutes a strategic and systematic approach to reducing vulnerabilities and risks to hazards. By way of this framework, the World

The following three strategic goals support the achievement of the HFA’s expected outcome:

- The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction
- The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms, and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards
- The systematic incorporation of DRR approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery programs in the reconstruction of affected communities

Table 7: Hyogo Framework for Action priority areas of action

Action area	Description
HFA priority 1	Make disaster risk reduction a priority; ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional base for implementation. Collaboration is key.
HFA priority 2	Know the risks and take action. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks – and enhance early warning because early warning saves lives.
HFA priority 3	Build understanding and awareness. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels because local knowledge is critical for disaster reduction.
HFA priority 4	Reduce the underlying risk. Building resilience means reducing vulnerability and increasing coping capacity to protect communities.
HFA priority 5	Be prepared and ready to act. i.e. strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels noting that disaster preparedness takes practice.

The HFA template defines five key areas for priority action, with each area comprising a particular category of activities necessary to be undertaken in order to meet these goals. These objectives are summarised and illustrated in the matrix below.

Important note on the HFA:

The implementation and follow-up to the strategic goals and priorities for action set out in this Framework should be addressed by different stakeholders in a multisectoral approach, including the development sector. This does not then imply that a single agency is responsible for implementing all the elements in the framework. An agency could focus on one or more elements but should be aware if others are implementing other conceptual elements and at what scale. All actors are encouraged to build multi-stakeholder partnerships, at all levels, as appropriate, and on a voluntary basis, to contribute to the implementation of this Framework.

The purpose of the Framework is to describe the fivefold nature of the actions required to reduce suffering associated with disasters. Action is required at all levels – from international cooperation on issues such as warning systems down to contingency planning at community and family level, which enables people to respond to those warnings. In so doing, losses are minimized once disasters occur.

Although progress on implementing the Framework has been slow since it was conceptualized, it has become a useful reference tool in planning for DRR integration initiatives and a valuable asset for DRR advocacy work, urging Governments and development stakeholders to give higher priority to disaster risk-reducing activities. As tasked in 2005, Malawi reports on the progress being made in the implementation of DRR activities under the HFA.

3 Africa strategy for disaster risk reduction

The Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction was adopted by African ministers at the Tenth Meeting of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment from 26 to 30 June 2004 and submitted to the AU Assembly Summit, where the Strategy was positively received by Heads of State at the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Addis Ababa, from 6 to 8 July 2004, with a call to develop a Programme of Action for its implementation.

Disaster risk results from the interaction between natural, technological or conflict-induced hazards and vulnerability conditions. The Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction focuses on disasters arising from natural and related human-

induced hazards. The Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction builds on existing disaster risk reduction institutions and programmes available in African countries and in the RECs, and aims to mainstream them into development so that they can better contribute to disaster risk reduction. Disaster risk reduction as already defined is the systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks and avoid (prevent) or limit (mitigate and prepare) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development. The Strategy recognizes that some of these interventions are best undertaken at the national level. Its focus is therefore not to establish a regional mechanism for disaster risk reduction, but to facilitate initiatives by regional economic communities and countries to develop and implement their own strategies in harmony with the Strategy. In recognition of the different status of disaster risk reduction in regional economic communities and countries, the Strategy provides a broad range of strategic directions from which regional economic communities and countries can select to suit their respective contexts and needs.

The African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development recognize that promoting disaster risk reduction as an integral part of development is a major challenge. Indeed, strengthening and expanding the existing practices and mechanisms for disaster management will not adequately address the disaster risk problem in Africa: what is required is a transformation of the basic mindset and practices of national authorities; the disaster management community; the

public and development partners regarding the reduction of disaster risks. However, changing mindsets can take some time, so the Strategy does not cover a short-term timeframe. The Strategy is comprehensive in that it takes into account the need to reduce disaster risks sustainably, including those caused by conflicts. Complex humanitarian emergencies arising from conflicts exacerbate the effects of natural hazards such as famines and epidemics. This is because they increase the vulnerability status of the populations and ecosystems already stressed, thereby worsening the level of disaster risks. In turn, the type, onset and intensity of conflicts are also influenced by natural hazards, particularly environmental hazards. Therefore, both issues need to be integrated into disaster risk reduction interventions. However, it was decided that the issue of conflict resolution and peace building was best left to the African Union Commission on Peace and Security to deal with, the Commission having more experience and expertise in these matters. But the linkages between conflict and disaster reduction should be maintained through regular communications between those institutions implementing the Regional Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Commission. More practical interventions in the area of conflict are also addressed at a sub-regional level. Nonetheless, the Strategy addresses disasters caused by natural hazards caused by mass population movement resulting from conflicts. Additionally, it is believed that the effective implementation of the Strategy should contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Annex 3: MGDS Theme Three: Social Support and Disaster Risk Management

Table 8: Sub-Theme 2 of the MGDS: Disaster Risk Management

Goal	Medium-term expected outcomes	Strategies	Constraints	Focus actions and activities	Risk
To reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of disasters	Strengthened capacity for effective preparedness, response and recovery	Developing and strengthening policy and institutional frameworks	-Weak institutional capacity -Poor awareness of disaster risk reduction among stakeholders at all levels	- Develop DRM policy - Review Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act (1991) -Develop and implement DRM communication strategy -Invest in knowledge and education for disaster risk management	
		Mainstreaming disaster risk management into policies, strategies and programmes	-Insufficient institutional capacity and planning process for disaster risk management	-Develop guidelines for DRM mainstreaming -Train and raise stakeholders' awareness of mainstreaming disaster risk management - Build DRM and CCA capacity	Lack of sectoral commitments
		Strengthening DRM coordination mechanisms among stakeholders	-Inadequate human resources -Non-existence of a multi-stakeholder forum for coordination	-Establish and operationalize multi-stakeholder forum for coordination of DRM activities	Competing priorities among stakeholders
		Enhancing capacity on the use of GIS and other remote sensing technologies	-Inadequate capacity in using space-based technology -Inadequate resources can impede the development of maps	-Train officers in the use of space-based information and technology -Develop risk assessment guidelines -Conduct DRR and CCA risk assessment in disaster-prone districts -Procure GIS equipment and software	High staff turnover

Goal	Medium-term expected outcomes	Strategies	Constraints	Focus actions and activities	Risk
		Developing an integrated national early warning system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inadequate and outdated equipment -Inadequate personnel in relevant institutions -Lack of linkages among existing early warning system and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establish an integrated early warning system -Develop hazard maps -Conduct survey to identify potential national and cross border risks -Develop risk monitoring system and database of potential risks -Upgrade early warning system to international standards -Conduct capacity building for early warning system 	-Poor coordination with neighbouring countries on early warning system
		Implementing mitigation measures in disaster-prone areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inadequate funding mechanism for contingency planning and response -Inadequate expertise in disaster recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop contingency plans in all districts -Network disaster-prone districts (internet website/ communication) - Raise local authorities' awareness of contingency plans - Incorporate risk reduction approaches into the design implementation of DRM programmes -Build capacity of stakeholders in risk and disaster preparedness, response and recovery -Conduct DRR and CCA risk assessment in disaster-prone districts -Conduct a comprehensive analysis of documented best practices -Construct warehouses for the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in strategic places 	Magnitude of disaster

Goal	Medium-term expected outcomes	Strategies	Constraints	Focus actions and activities	Risk
		Incorporating disaster risk management in all school curricula	-Limited research and skills in disaster risk management -Limited resources	-Engage learning institutions on the incorporation of disaster risk management into the existing education and training curriculum -Develop short-term and long-term DRM courses -Conduct research on locally appropriate disaster risk management technologies and approaches	-Competing priorities among courses offered in training and education institutions -Lack of commitment to carry out research in disaster risk management
		Promoting awareness, access, distribution and utilization of reliable and relevant DRM information	Insufficient DRM knowledge by the media	-Develop DRM website and information centre -Raise the media's awareness about DRM issues -Disseminate operational guidelines, policy, the DRM Handbook and DRR framework to all stakeholders	-Competing priorities on what to cover by media houses

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