

DISCLOSURE OF SAFEGUARD DOCUMENTS FOR AGRICULTURE SECTOR WIDE APPROACH-SUPPORT PROJECT II-P16445

INTRODUCTION

The Malawi Government has acquired funding to a tune of USD50 Million from the Mult Donor Trust Fund to implement activities under Agriculture Sector wide Approach II (ASWAp-SP II) Project.

The ASWAp SP II is a follow up to the ASWAp SP I Project which was implemented between 2008 and 2016. Out of the six original donors that supported the project, five donors EU, Irish Aid, Flanders, USAID and Norway are still interested to continue with the follow up operation as a way of consolidating and sustaining the gains made by the previous project, as well as finalize implementation of necessary reforms that were initiated under ASWAp SP I. This project will be implemented in 12 selected districts , namely Chitipa, Mzimba, Kasungu, Mchinji, Ntchisi, Lilongwe, Dedza ,Ntcheu , Zomba ,Phalombe , Mulanje and Thyolo from 2017 to 2020.

OBJECTIVES

a) Higher Level Objectives to which the Project Contributes

1. The proposed ASWAp SP II contributes to the WBG's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. The low productivity and over dependency on maize and tobacco based farming systems, need to be tackled as a way of developing a resilient and diversified agriculture sector. Through improved productivity, improved market access infrastructure, adoption of technologies, restoration of soil fertility, resilience and diversified agricultural systems, the proposed project will address many of the challenges constraining agriculture development in Malawi.
2. The World Bank Group (WBG) is currently preparing a Systematic Country Diagnostic for Malawi. Based on evidence collected so far, agriculture is strongly associated with key binding constraints to achieving the WBG two goals, and the subsequent Country Partnership Framework for 2019-2023 is therefore very likely to have a major focus on agriculture. The proposed Project is also consistent with the previous WBG Country Assistance Strategy for Malawi (2013-17). The project is closely linked to outcomes 1.2 on "promoting a supportive environment that will enhance inclusive private sector growth and competitiveness" and outcome 1.3 on "increased productivity and commercialization of agriculture and sustainable management of water resources for multiple uses", all falling under Thematic Area 1 of "Promoting sustainable, diversified and inclusive growth".
3. ASWAp SP II also aligns with the GoM's MGDS III key priority areas of Agriculture, Water Development and Climate Change Management, and Transport and Information Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure, both of which are contributing to the achievement of agricultural growth targets, which are critical for maintaining strong GDP growth. MDGS III emphasizes, under agriculture, water development and climate change management: i) increased production and productivity, ii) increased agricultural diversification, iii) improved nutrition and food security, iv) increased agriculture market development, v) agro-processing and value addition, vi) enhanced agricultural risk management, and vii) increased empowerment of youth, women, persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups in agriculture. Under transport and ICT infrastructure, the following have been highlighted: i) reduced travel time and cost for persons and goods, ii) improved transport reliability levels of service and efficiency, and

iii) enhance access to local and international markets. Activities under the proposed project will also contribute to NAP outcomes—increased agricultural production, productivity, diversification, and marketed surplus; increased access by producers and consumers to well-functioning markets; and increased engagement by women, youth, and vulnerable groups in agricultural policy, processes, and programmes. Project activities also directly address the NES priority areas for developing Malawi’s productive base of farm and agribusiness products to foster export competitiveness and economic empowerment. ASWAp SP II also reflects development programmes articulated in the draft NAIP (particularly in programme area 1: policies, institutions and coordination; programme area 2: resilient livelihoods and production systems; programme area 3: production and productivity; and programme area 4: markets, value addition, trade and finance). And lastly, apart from supporting the national goal of attaining gender balance in all sectors and programs, the project contributes to the higher-level objectives of poverty reduction and improved resilience of production.

4. The proposed project will link with several World Bank projects particularly the following: (1) Agriculture Commercialization Project (P158434), a project that is aimed at increasing the commercialization of agricultural value chain products in the country for both domestic and commercial markets; (2) Shire Valley Transformation Project (SVTP) (P158805), a big growth pole transformative project supporting large scale irrigation intensive and inclusive commercial agricultural development in the Shire Valley in Southern Malawi, while building lessons from past project like ASWAp SP (aimed at improving the effectiveness of investments aimed at food security and sustainable agricultural growth (with components on land governance and rural roads to improve market access of agricultural products), IRLAD (P048184) and CBRLDP (P075247); (3) the Second Agricultural Support and Fiscal Management Development Policy Operation (P164122) series which is aimed at assisting the Government of Malawi in its efforts to improve incentives for private sector participation in agricultural markets and strengthen fiscal management through more effective expenditure controls and greater transparency; (4) Agricultural Productivity Programme for Southern Africa (APPSA) (P094183), a regional programme aimed to improve agricultural productivity through research, technology development (including infrastructure support); (5) Malawi Floods Emergency Response Project (P154803); (6) and the Drought Response Recovery and Resilience Project (P161392); (7) Shire River Basin Management Programme (P117617); and (8) the Southern Africa Trade and Transport Facilitation Programme (SATTFP) (P145566) whose interventions aim at facilitating trade in the region, including agriculture. In this respect, the proposed project will build synergies with these Bank financed projects and draw lessons in order to catalyze increased productivity and diversification. The Project design draws lessons from other donor funded interventions in the agriculture sector as well.

b) PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

I. PDO

To improve the productivity and market access of selected commodities for small-holder farmers in targeted districts of Malawi

ii Project Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of the project include (i) smallholder farmers and local communities who will benefit from improved agricultural interventions and jobs, (ii) road users from improved road infrastructure, (iii) staff trained, and (iv) institutions including: MoAIWD, RA, District Councils and the construction industry. The project will ensure that women and youth are well represented as beneficiaries of the project.

iii. PDO-Level Results Indicators

The key PDO indicators are:

- i) Volume of production and productivity of selected agricultural commodities;
- ii) Number of agricultural marketing centers connected by rehabilitated roads;
- iii) Farmers reached with agricultural assets or services of which female.

c) PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Components

a) The proposed project will address the PDO through a community demand driven approach, building on the lessons and successes of the ASWAp SP I. The project will ensure that the activities promoted are technically and environmentally sound and ensure that the activities are sustained after project closure. The project will be implemented in 12 districts¹ where roads works will be done, aimed at ensuring a comprehensive package of support from production to marketing of selected agricultural commodities/value chains, while targeting smallholder and emerging farmers. The project structure will include four components, which are aligned to the NAIP.

Component 1: Sustainable Agricultural Productivity and Diversification

b) This component will address constraints related to limited agricultural productivity and diversification which has been adversely affected by climate change, thereby limiting agricultural growth and food security. Key constraints include: (i) weak agricultural extension services, leading to low adoption

of improved agricultural technologies; (ii) inadequate utilization of productive assets such as land and water – leading to unsustainable agricultural practices; (iii) limited access to finance, compounding to limited input use; (iv) low soil fertility and its continuous depletion; (v) pests and disease outbreaks combined with limited skills of farmers and extension workers to use integrated pest and disease management (IPDM) practices; and (vi) climate change. This component will have two sub components: i) Promotion of diversified and integrated crop production and management systems (including IPDM practices), and ii) Promotion of Integrated Soil Fertility Management.

Sub-Component 1.1: Promotion of diversified integrated crop production and management systems

c) The sub-component will support crop diversification and strengthening crop production and management systems through (a) support to diversified seed systems, (b) support to FISP by promoting access to improved inputs including high yielding maize varieties, other cereals and legume seeds, (c) strengthening crop protection through promotion of IPDM for pests and diseases control and reduction of post-harvest losses, and (d) Strengthening innovative agricultural extension and advisory services as a key driver to enhance sustainable crop diversification, production and management systems.

d) *Under diversified seed systems* the project will support (i) micro propagation, macro-propagation and establishment of communal nurseries for mass production of clean banana planting materials, in response to the banana bunchy top virus (BBTV) disease and ensuring that smallholder farmers access clean banana planting materials of different varieties and are skilled to manage them in a sustainable manner, (ii) production of breeder and foundation legumes seeds (in response to existing demand), while ensuring that the legumes seed revolving fund that was established under previous ASWAp SP is functional to sustain future basic legume seed demands, and (iii) farmers' access to clean planting materials for vitamin A enriched and high quality cassava varieties and sweet potatoes (highly productive and drought resilient) through rapid multiplication and decentralized multipliers and additional support to conserve and promote genetic resources for other drought tolerant crops such as cocoyams and Yams.

e) The project will work with the following institutions to deliver on these activities: i) the Department of Agriculture Research Services (DARS), Department of Crop Development (DCD) , Department of Agriculture Extension Services (DAES) and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) on micro and macro propagation, ii) Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) centers (including the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), International Center for Potato (CIP), International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and DARS on the production of the breeder seed for legumes and roots and tubers, and iii) DARS on farmers' access to clean planting materials on root and tubers.

f) *Under the FISP*, the project will support: (i) the seed component of the FISP as a vehicle to improve crop productivity and diversification. The seed component traditionally comprise of certified maize seed (hybrid or open pollinated varieties) and certified legume seeds (soybean, beans, pigeon peas, groundnuts) to selected farmers. The project will support recent reforms by the MoAIWD to include other cereals seed such as sorghum and rice; (ii) operations of the Logistics Unit, an independent entity responsible for farm family updating, beneficiary registry, input monitoring and verification of FISP payments; (iii) implementation of FISP reforms, aimed at improving programme efficiency and effectiveness; and (iv) independent monitoring/evaluation as well as improving coupon security and

innovativeness, in line with the FISP reforms and including monitoring of seed quality for FISP in selling points. The project will work with DCD, DARS and Logistics unit on the implementation of these activities.

g) *Under crop protection:* The project will promote IPDM practices including both preventive and curative measures to anticipate and/or respond to emerging pests and diseases that greatly affect agricultural production, in line with the value chains supported. Specific support will be provided in the following areas: (i) awareness and surveillance of pests and disease outbreak, (ii) educate staff and beneficiaries in IPDM principles as part of good practices to prevent and/or control pests and diseases, (iii) support operations of plant clinics, while linking such efforts to the district agricultural extension service system, (iv) support knowledge sharing and learning, and (v) post-harvest losses in sweet potatoes. The project will work with the following institutions to deliver on these activities: i) DCD, DARS and DAES on awareness support and surveillance of pests and disease outbreak, ii) DCD, DAES and DARS on education to staff and beneficiaries on IPDM principles, iii) DAES on operations of plant clinics, iv) DARS and DCD on post-harvest losses and v) DARS, and DCD on institutional support for pest control.

h) *Under strengthening and implementation of innovative agricultural extension and advisory services:* The project will support i) Improved coordination, regulation and the coverage of agriculture extension and advisory service delivery among extension service providers. This will be done through strengthening and roll-out of the Agriculture Extension and Advisory Services strategy under development that was supported under the previous ASWAp SP project; ii) implement innovative extension delivery approaches, methods and tools to enhance sustainable productivity and reach out to all categories of farmers including women and youth; iii) development and capacity building for farmer organizations, iv) nutrition education, diversification and utilization; and v) gender mainstreaming using approaches and tools that encourage improved gender relations at household level such as the household economy approach. The project will work with the following institutions to deliver on these activities: i) DAES on improved coordination, regulation and coverage of agriculture extension and advisory service delivery, ii) DAES, DCD, DLRCO and DARS on implementation of innovative extension delivery approaches, methods and tools, iii) DAES, DARS on development and capacity building of farmer organizations and nutrition education, diversification and utilization and iv) DAES and UN Women on gender mainstreaming and facilitate implementation of interventions that help in closing the gender gaps in the agriculture sector in Malawi.

Sub-Component 1.2: Promotion of Integrated Soil Fertility Management

i) The project will support (i) scaling up of climate smart agriculture practices among the smallholder farmers in order to increase soil organic matter content, reduce soil water loss as a way of enhancing the resilience of agricultural production systems to climatic change shocks. These practices will include conservation agriculture with trees, agroforestry, compost making and use, and integrated sustainable land and water management practices, (ii) support implementation of area specific fertilizer recommendations and other good agronomic practices based on soil testing/analysis, ensuring dissemination of the messages and piloting the recommendations in specific districts through demonstrations and trials, and in line with findings from the soil maps. One option is that the Project will pilot provision of FISP fertilizers to respond to the released fertilizer recommendations. The project will work with the following institutions to deliver on the activities: i) DLRCO and DAES on scaling up climate smart agriculture, ii) DARS, DLRCO, DCD, and DAES on support development of area specific fertilizer recommendations and other good agronomic practices, and iii) DARS, DCD, Logistics unit, and Private sector on pilot provision of FISP fertilizers to respond to the released fertilizer recommendations.

Component 2: Improvement of Rural Road Infrastructure for Market Access

j) The objective of this component is to facilitate market access for farmers through improvement of road and bridge infrastructure. There are notable challenges in rural areas for farmers to bring their produce to markets due to poor conditions of the rural unpaved roads. Most linkages are cut-off and drainage structures heavily damaged and/or washed away. Transporters avoid using these roads due to their poor condition and potential damage to their vehicles, which leads to high maintenance costs. Due to less supply of motorized transport, the transportation costs are very high and the farmers are left with no choice but to carry average headloads to the nearest markets. This compromises on both volumes of farm produces to the markets and bargaining price with buyers. Similarly farm inputs do not easily reach the farmers in a timely manner. Support under this project will be provided in form of two main areas of interventions: (i) improvement of the unpaved rural roads through labor-intensive rehabilitation and upgrading works using Low Volume Sealing Methods in 12 selected districts, and where the activities under Component 1 will take place, and (ii) implementation support to the District Councils to carry out the works.

Sub-component 2.1: Improvement of Rural Unpaved Roads

k) The project will support similar road improvement interventions as under the ASWAp-SP I, but this time with emphasis on providing more income and jobs to the local communities through the labor-intensive road rehabilitation methods. It is expected that communities will improve their livelihoods through their participation in the road works and by the way of improved access to markets for their agricultural products. In addition, the project will also incorporate more sustainable interventions in form of Low Volume Sealed Roads (LVSR) as these were adjudged to have significantly improved the mobility of motorized traffic.

l) The road works will be implemented over a two-year period in two batches of six districts each for the labor-intensive rehabilitation. The LVSR will however be implemented as one batch for all the districts during the first year of implementation. The twelve beneficiary districts were determined using a criterion agreed among the donors and the Government facilitated by the MoTPW and MoAIWD. The criteria included actual and potential agricultural productivity, poverty levels and population. Some of the districts selected by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD) to participate in the government's "fast track" decentralization process was also considered for prioritization in this programme. The first phase will comprise Chitipa, Mzimba, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Mchinji and Dedza, while the rest will be considered under Phase 2.

m) The selection of roads and interventions for rehabilitation/improvement within each of the participating districts will be conducted on the basis of agreed criteria using a Road Selection and Design Consultant and will include:

- Establishing more reliable access to trading centers and planned investments in agricultural production (e.g. irrigation systems, out growers' schemes, newly introduced crops);
- Overall connectivity within the district for social reasons (such as access to health, education and any other services) and for food security purposes; and

- Interest by private producer organizations in establishing reliable access and sustainable maintenance of the roads.

n) The Client for the road works will be District Councils (DC) in each of the participating districts, with the RA providing backstopping support. The Road Selection and Design Consultant will provide technical support to the DCs for the road selection process and development of a schedule of works. The prioritization of the roads will be based on the methodology developed under EU funded RIDP in 2012, with some modifications to reflect lessons learnt from the ASWAp-SP I. The Design Consultant will also conduct a Baseline Survey and Impact Study on all the selected roads in the 12 districts.

o) Tenders for the works contracts will be launched at the district level using tender dossiers prepared by the Road Selection and Design Consultant. The Consultant will use existing standards in the design of all the works and prepare technical specifications in accordance with Southern Africa Transport and Communication Commission (SATCC) Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Works and the Ministry of Works Standard Manual for Design of Rural Roads. It is expected that payments to the contractors and supervision consultants will be made by the RFA on the basis of payment certificates issued by the DCs. At the end of the first year of implementation, an assessment will be made of whether the district councils have put in place sufficient financial management systems to replace the RFA in its role of payment agent. Those DCs with satisfactory performance may be considered for decentralization of some activities as envisaged by the MoTPW and the MoLGRD. Supervision Consultants will also be procured by each DC, to assist them with the evaluation of works tenders and the supervision of the works. Tender dossiers for the procurement of the Supervision Consultants will also be prepared by the Road Selection and Design Consultant. The Road Selection and Design Consultant will maintain a quality control monitoring role during the implementation phase of the works.

p) A separate consultant will be engaged to conduct the Environmental and Social Screening of all the selected roads, bridges and other drainage structures. The consultant will work hand in hand with the Road Selection and Design Consultant. The Environmental and Social Safeguards Consultant will clearly make a socio-economic assessment of all environmental and social issues and ensure that all triggered safeguard policies are properly addressed and incorporated in the works bid documents. Similarly, social safeguards issues, including compensation and labor influx, will need to be clearly outlined and mitigation measures put in place. The RFA will work closely with the consultant and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MoLHUD) to come up with estimates for the compensations for PAPs which will need to be presented to the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MoFEPD) and the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) for processing. Meanwhile the RFA will provide an estimate to the MoFEPD in advance for consideration. Government, through the MoFEPD and OPC will be responsible for payment of all compensations for the PAPs. In regards to the issue of labor influx, the consultant will be required to outline measures that mitigate negative impacts to the environment and local communities.

q) Under this sub-component, the project will fund the procurement and implementation of the works contracts for labor intensive rehabilitation and LVSR upgrading of a targeted 1200 km of roads.

Sub-component 2.2: Implementation Support to District Councils

r) The project will provide implementation support to the District Councils to facilitate proper supervision and monitoring of the works. This component will be implemented in complementarity with an EU project being implemented by the National Authorizing Office Support Unit (NAO-SU) under the Rural Roads Improvement Programme (RRImP). RRImP is aimed at contributing towards improved access to economic and social resources by the rural population in particular smallholder farmers, through improved, rehabilitated and properly maintained roads. To achieve this, the EU programme is supporting the achievement of proper skills at both central and local levels in organisational, financial and technical aspects for the sustainability of the rural roads. The programme expects to establish good skills, systems and incentives in the local government, as well as policy guidance, and financial and technical support at national level. RRImP will analyse capacity gaps and provide training and support to staff in the District Councils.

s) In complimentary to RRImP, the ASWAp-SP II Roads Component will provide the District Councils with equipment, resources and hands-on/practical skills to facilitate the implementation of the works and equip the DCs with a proper environment for decentralization. This sub-component will support facilitation of sensitization workshops in the District Councils on the modalities of implementation of the works in all the 12 Districts and discuss roles and responsibilities the whole procurement process, contract supervision, and monitoring of both works and supervision contracts. Support will also entail procurement of vehicles and computers for use by the Councils.

t) The Road Fund Administration will maintain its role of making all payments related to the project and providing periodic technical audits to monitor quality and adherence to standards. The previous FM assessment of ASWAp-SP I indicated some weaknesses in FM control issues in some of the District Councils. For this reason, all payments to contractors for both works and supervision will be paid directly by the RFA. It is, however, expected that payments for contractors will eventually be decentralized for those District Councils that perform well in their fiduciary tasks. In addition, to ensure effective supervision of the contracts by the districts, some operational funds will be disbursed directly to the district councils.

u) Under this sub-component, the project will provide operation funds to the Roads Authority, Road Fund Administration and the District Councils. It will also fund consultancy services for the Road Selection and Design Consultant, the Environmental and Social Safeguard Consultant, Supervision Consultant and individual consultants employed under the RA as Project Engineers to provide back stopping to District Councils. The project will also fund workshops and any training requirements for contractors and supervision consultants to improve capacity.

Component 3: Institutional Capacity Development for NAIP

v) The objective of this component is to build the capacity of the MoAIWD to fully operationalize the NAIP. This follows key achievements made from the previous ASWAp SP which supported ASWAp Secretariat and associated ASWAp processes that improved coordination, dialogue and harmonization of investments in the agriculture sector. Based on lessons learned, capacity gaps persist for a fully functional NAIP. Additionally, and in line with the results of the Core Function Analysis (CFA) which was conducted before closure of previous ASWAp SP, the proposed project will support prioritized critical capacity gaps to effectively propel NAIP functionality. The NAIP Secretariat will continue to play a coordination role of various NAIP processes.

Sub-component 3.1: Institutional Capacity Building

w) There still remains an institutional capacity development gap for a fully functional NAIP in the MoAIWD. For this reason, a CFA was conducted to inform capacity building needs for the Ministry. The CFA results will be used as a basis to prioritize capacity building interventions. In line with this, the project will support training officers at Masters and Diploma levels at LUANAR's (Bunda and Natural Resources College (NRC) campuses respectively).

x) The DAPS, which has a very critical role in leading and operationalizing the NAIP processes, will particularly be supported to improve planning and alignment of the Ministry's budgeting to the NAIP framework. The key NAIP institutional mechanisms i.e. the Joint Sector Review, Agriculture Sector Working Groups and Technical Working Groups, will continue to be supported (and strengthened) with the view to deepen coordination efforts and dialogue among stakeholders in the agriculture sector. The project will further support sector coordination in line with CAADP and Malabo Declaration Agenda.

y) Institutional capacity gaps were also identified in some key institutions of the transport sector to effectively implement the road component of the project. Capacity development in these institutions is important for effective project implementation and sustainability. Under the project, Local Councils will be trained on how to plan, procure, manage, monitor and supervise rehabilitation and maintenance works. Local contractors and consultants will also be trained in the design and construction of LVSR. At community level, local maintenance clubs will be formed and trained in road construction and maintenance using labour intensive methods. Short-term training programmes in procurement and project management for technical staff from MoTPW, MoLGRD, RA and RFA will also be supported under the project.

z) To ensure continuation and effective completion of some of the key activities that were already commissioned at the closure of ASWAP SP I, the project will retroactively finance these based on the agreements reached at that time. The appropriate Bank policy on retroactive financing will be adhered to, in consultation with the disbursement and legal units of the World Bank Group.

Sub-component 3.2: Strengthening M&E and Agricultural Statistics

- a) This sub-component will strengthen the capacity of the DAPS to enhance strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation functions of the MoAIWD at all levels. The M&E system will equally install an internal learning process and move beyond reporting of project outputs. The project will:
- (i) strengthen the M&E system through web based management information systems to track progress of NAIP indicators at various levels,
 - (ii) support improvement of the agricultural production estimates methodology, with particular focus on implementation of the recommendations from the pilot studies to improve agricultural production estimates that were undertaken in the previous project,
 - (iii) develop an agricultural statistics data bank,
 - (iv) carry out food security monitoring and reporting and
 - (v) rationalizing the district M&E administration requirements. These activities are key elements of the National Statistics and Strategic Masterplan (NSSM) that was developed under the ASWAp SP I. Such efforts will ensure timely, accurate agricultural statistics, that is critical for planning in the sector. **The project will also put in place mechanisms of providing opportunities to participating communities to provide feedback through an independent service provider.**

Component 4: Project Coordination and Management

b) This component will finance project management activities, including the hiring of the Project Facilitation Team (PFT), an arrangement similar to what existed during the implementation of the ASWAp SP I, which worked well. The PFT will coordinate the implementation of project activities, monitor project progress, ensure sound fiduciary management, social and environmental safeguards compliance, and engage in communication and reporting. The PFT will comply with the World Bank's fiduciary reporting requirements, including submission of project implementation progress reports on a semi-annual basis, Interim Unaudited Financial Reports on quarterly basis, as well as annual audited reports. In addition, the PFT would be responsible for managing contracts and consultancies. A review of staffing establishment of the PFT will be made to streamline with capacity requirements to implement the new project. As was the case with the previous project, technical assistants will be engaged to beef up the capacity of the PFT.

c) This component will also support: (i) baseline, mid-term review, end line and other lessons learning studies, and (ii) putting in place of a citizen engagement and social accountability mechanism, including grievance redress mechanisms. Annex 1 provides details on implementation arrangements, including PFT activities.

Cross Cutting Issues

d) The project will mainstream **gender, nutrition, climate smart agriculture** and **resilience** throughout its components. Regarding **gender**, the project will help close the gender gaps in the areas of productivity and access to agriculture inputs and services. It will also seek innovative ways to reduce the women's work burden. Activities targeting women will be demand driven and based on analysis of women's and men's constraints and opportunities under each component. The project will ensure that all gender categories are encouraged to participate in the project. In line with this, the gender and HIV/AIDS strategy for the agriculture sector which recognizes the above aspects, will guide gender mainstreaming within the project.

e) In line with National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan, the project will support interventions aiming at improving production and utilization of **nutritious** foods. This is also in line with Policy Priority Area # 5 of the National Agriculture Policy (food and nutrition security). The project will further create synergies with Bank interventions to improve nutrition (under preparation) e.g. nutrition sensitive agriculture pilot project and Investment in Early Years for Growth and Productivity.

f) The ASWAp II project will support **climate smart agriculture** and **resilience** through climate smart and environmental practices, such as promotion of climate change resilient crops, sustainable land management practices and integrated pest management practices. The integration of practices such as conservation agriculture, agroforestry, and sustainable intensification will have mitigation co-benefits (reduced GHG emissions and improved soil carbon sequestration). Climate smart practices to minimize production risks and enhance resilience will be integrated within activities under crop diversification and productivity.

DISCLOSURE OF THE SAFEGUARD DOCUMENTS

Considering the complexity of the project activities that will be implemented during the whole period of

the project, the Government of Malawi is hereby disclosing the following documents for public consumption:

- 1.** Environmental and Social Management Framework
- 2.** Pest Management Plan and
- 3.** Resettlement Policy Frame work.

These documents will also be made available at the District Council offices to be accessed by the public when requested..