



# Inside the MNSSP

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## Introducing the new MNSSP Newsletter

Dear Partners,

Welcome to the first issue of *Inside the Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP)*. Our objective in producing this newsletter is to keep you abreast of the many exciting developments and milestones happening in social protection in Malawi.

In recent years, the need for social protection in Malawi has grown due to the deteriorating economic situation, which has been exacerbated by drought and floods, pushing more people into poverty and vulnerability. We hope that this newsletter will be a source of news about what the Government of Malawi, in collaboration with its partners, is doing to improve the situation of the poor and vulnerable.

This first issue will inform you about the coordinating role that the Poverty

Reduction and Social Protection Division, which falls under the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, is playing to ensure that the implementation of social protection works like a well-oiled machine. This issue will also highlight the key strategies that are being put in place to facilitate the smooth implementation of the MNSSP.

This newsletter is relevant to implementers as well as other stakeholders of the MNSSP, and it is our sincere hope that you will find it of great value in your work.

Enjoy reading,



**Yona Kamphale**  
Acting Chief Director  
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Public Works Programme beneficiaries



Children eating their school meals



Payout day for social cash transfers



## Meet the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division



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## Behind the Scenes

Three hot topics have been on the MNSSP agenda over the past couple of months. Below is a brief summary of what is going on behind the scenes at the MNSSP.

### MNSSP Review Process

Over the past few months, coordinators and implementers have been meeting in workshops to assess the current performance of each programme component of the MNSSP. Using a traffic light evaluation system, critical areas of work have been identified to guide the development of MNSSP II. Review meetings have also been held on the linkages between MNSSP interventions and other sectors (e.g., agriculture) and will feed into the overall review exercise. A final review report will be completed by the end of November.

### Unified Beneficiary Registry

The Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) is a web-based national management information system and



Participants engaged in the VSL review process

database used for storing, accessing, analysing and sharing beneficiary household data. It is designed for use by those implementing social support programmes for targeting, linking, monitoring and producing periodic reports on the outreach and implementation of programmes. It offers information on the number of beneficiaries being reached by a programme and is a common sharing point for other systems to obtain household data for their programmes. In collaboration with the UBR Task Force, a consultant has developed an interview guide tool for harmonised data collection, which was suc-

cessfully tested in two traditional authorities (TAs) in Phalombe. The exercise included training of district staff and enumerators on data collection. A total of 100 households in Jenala TA and Chiwalo TA were sampled during pretesting to ensure the appropriateness of the tools and consistency of questions in the interview guide.

A validation workshop on the harmonised data tool was conducted in the first week of September. In addition, the long-anticipated production process is expected to start with the Development Pathway of Kenya joining the team in

the step-by-step process of coding, development and implementation. The production process is expected to run for eight weeks with further components to be upgraded during the support and maintenance phase.

### Social Support Fund

The Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, with support from GIZ, commissioned a feasibility study to explore options for the creation of a common funding mechanism for the MNSSP to be known as the Social Support Fund (SSF). The SSF is expected to contribute to (1) greater harmonisation and strategic alignment of MNSSP activities with Government of Malawi policy; (2) more predictability of resource flows to the MNSSP; (3) better coordination resulting in a reduction in transaction costs and; (4) greater flexibility in implementation of MNSSP activities. Stakeholders validated the study report on 11 July 2016 in Lilongwe. The report sets out a roadmap of incremental improvements to increase financial coordination to enable the sector to move towards the establishment of the SSF in the medium term.



Stakeholders at one of the Linkages Review meetings

### Hot Topics:

- **MNSSP review revealing strengths and future challenges of the social protection instruments**
- **Fast-tracking of the UBR process**
- **Findings of the SSF feasibility study discussed on 11 July**



### Important Events

<b>Microfinance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22nd Annual Boulder Microfinance Training Programme (Turin, July 2016)</li> <li>Mapping of Microfinance Services in Malawi (December 2016)</li> </ul>
<b>Public Works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making Public Works Inclusive pilot (Dedza, July 2016)</li> <li>Best Practice guideline finalisation and dissemination (December 2016)</li> </ul>
<b>School Meals</b>	Best Practice guideline finalisation and dissemination (October 2016)
<b>Social Cash Transfer</b>	Scale-up to new districts (October 2016)
<b>Cross-cutting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-stakeholder learning mission to Ethiopia (September 2016)</li> <li>International Symposium on Social Protection Systems – Tying the Knots (Bonn, September 2016)</li> <li>Review workshop of Mwanza Economic Empowerment pilot (September 2016)</li> </ul>



Microfinance supports small businesses



A VSL group gathering to discuss their savings and loans

### Contact & Support

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#### This is a publication of the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division.

The Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division is mandated to: provide policy guidance on poverty reduction and social support; coordinate the development of poverty reduction and social support programmes; provide guidance for the implementation of such programmes; and support the creation of linkages between poverty reduction and social support programmes with other socio-economic programmes. In addition to the Government of Malawi, the following partners provide technical and financial support to the Division to fulfil its role:



FAO Malawi is currently supporting implementation of a Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) aimed at strengthening linkages between social protection programmes and the agricultural sector.



UNICEF/Irish Aid supports the Division with strengthening social protection systems; scaling up the Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) and enhancing linkages with other social services at both national and district levels.



The African Development Bank is supporting the Division to strengthen targeting and coordination mechanisms through the introduction of the Unified Beneficiary Registry for the entire social support programme.



GIZ, on behalf of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), works to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development to improve the coherence and integration of the five NSSP programmes, as well as to improve coordination at both national and district levels.



The ILO provides technical advice to the Division on key aspects of designing and implementing social protection programmes and systems while focusing on sharing international experiences, facilitating trainings, and increasing the evidence base on key aspects of developing coherent social protection systems.