



Republic of Malawi

**Malawi National Social Support
Programme II (MNSSP II)**

March 2018

Executive Summary

There is a pressing need to strengthen the provision of social support and social protection for the many people in Malawi whose living standards are vulnerable to the recurring and occasional threats that the country is exposed to. The Malawi National Social Support Programme II (MNSSP II) will run from 2018 to 2023 building on the successes and lessons learned during the implementation of the first MNSSP. It is organised around thematic priority areas and provides policy guidance on promoting linkages, strengthening systems and improving monitoring activities. The shift to thematic priority areas in this second programme ensures greater alignment of individual programme objectives with the objectives of the National Social Support Policy, 2012 (NSSP) and the MNSSP II. The following are the programme's priority support areas:

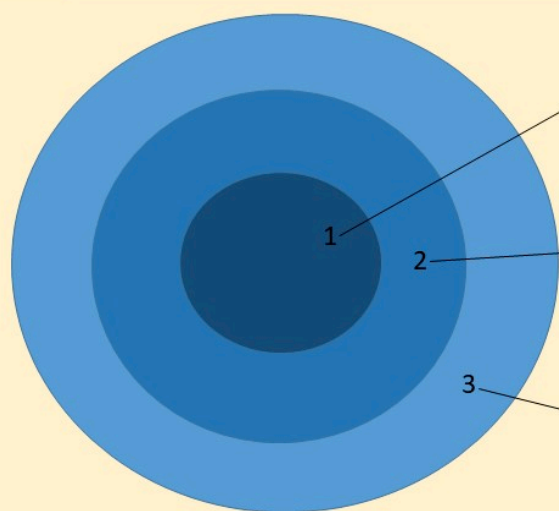
- **Pillar 1: Consumption support** – The provision of consumption support through timely, predictable and adequate cash and/or in-kind transfers to poor and vulnerable people throughout their life cycles.
- **Pillar 2: Resilient livelihoods** – Promoting resilient livelihoods through tailored packages based on individual, household, and community needs via poverty graduation pathways and inter-programme linkages and by facilitating access to and the utilisation of services beyond the MNSSP II programmes.
- **Pillar 3: Shock-sensitive social protection** – The development of a shock-sensitive social protection system that meets seasonal needs, prepares for and responds to unpredictable shocks in cooperation with the humanitarian sector and supports recovery and the return to regular programming.

Cross-cutting and programme specific strategic actions are presented for each pillar. The diagram below gives an overview of MNSSP II and its three pillars.

Overview of Malawi National Social Support Programme II

Strategic objectives :

- Provide welfare support to those unable to develop viable livelihoods
- Protect assets and improve the resilience of poor and vulnerable households
- Increase productive capacity and asset base of poor vulnerable households
- Establish coherent synergies by ensuring strong linkages to economic and social policies and disaster risk management



Provide consumption support through timely, predictable and adequate cash and or in-kind transfers to poor and vulnerable people throughout their lifecycle.

Promote resilient livelihoods through tailored packages based on individual, households and community needs via poverty graduation pathways, inter-programme linkages and facilitating access to and use of services beyond MNSSP II

Develop a shock-sensitive social protection system that meets seasonal needs, prepares for and responds to unpredictable shocks together with the humanitarian sector, and supports recovery and the return to regular programming.

Realise synergies across different programmes and pillars by integrating different initiatives and harmonizing and coordinating the delivery of social support through a strengthened social protection system.

MNSSP II recognises that the needs of poor and vulnerable people change over their life cycles and during times of shocks. As such, MNSSP II is not structured around individual interventions or programmes that target specific population groups. Instead it recognises the need for all social support programmes to coordinate and work together to provide consumption support and build resilient livelihoods. Improving the shock-sensitivity of the social protection system will better protect people's livelihoods against shocks.

There are only limited resources to provide for the very large social support needs in Malawi. Under these circumstances, improving existing and planned linkages within and outside the MNSSP with other relevant interventions and services and with the humanitarian and resilience sectors is key for maximising impact. Strong political leadership and efficient and effective systems will ensure that social support reaches all those in need and is provided in an adequate and reliable way. MNSSP II outlines the steps that need taking to improve institutional coordination, harmonise systems and increase implementation capacity.

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Abbreviations

CSSC	community social support committee
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DSSC	District Social Support Committee
EP&D	Department of Economic Planning and Development
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MK	Malawian Kwacha
MNSSP	Malawi National Social Support Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSSP	National Social Support Policy
PR&SP	Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (Division)
SCTP	Social Cash Transfer Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals

1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

Poverty and vulnerability are widespread in Malawi and so many people need social support (social protection) to help them meet their basic needs and overcome their exposure to risks. The first Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP) operationalized the National Social Support Policy between 2013 and June 2016. Following an extensive review and consultation process, the follow-on Malawi National Social Support Programme II (MNSSP II) was designed. The new programme builds on the achievements and incorporates lessons learned from the first MNSSP to strengthen the provision of social support in Malawi. The new programme provides a holistic guiding framework for designing, implementing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating social support programmes under shared thematic priorities, and operationalises the National Social Support Policy, 2012 (NSSP).

The National Social Support Policy and the first MNSSP were developed in 2012 as a result of increased national and international awareness that social support programmes are crucial for tackling pervasive poverty and food insecurity, for addressing inequality and ensuring that economic growth translates into improved livelihoods for the poorest and most vulnerable people. The Integrated Household Survey, 2010 (IHS) found that whilst the poverty headcount, which counts everyone who subsists on less than US\$ 0.36 per person per day (in 2010 prices), had fallen slightly from 52.4% in 2005 to 50.7% in 2010, the ultra-poor headcount had increased by 2.2 percentage points in the same period to 24.5%. The slow pace of poverty reduction and the increased share of the population who were ultra-poor led to the realisation that growth alone is not sufficient for reducing poverty at the scale and pace needed in Malawi. This rationale still holds today.

As a result, and in line with national and international development priorities, the Government of Malawi approved the National Social Support Policy in 2012. The first MNSSP was approved in 2013 and was subsequently updated. This document outlines MNSSP II, which is intended to run from January 2018 to 2023 concurrently with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III (MGDS III). The new programme confirms the government's commitment to delivering social support by providing income and consumption transfers to the poor and food insecure, protecting the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhancing the social status and rights of the marginalised, with the overall objective of reducing ultra (extreme) poverty as well as the economic and social vulnerability of poor and marginalised groups.

This document presents the strategic vision for the provision of social support in Malawi over the coming five years. It also includes the implementation plan for the five-year programme (see Annex 1).

1.2 Alignment with National, Regional and Global Policies

MNSSP II promotes the progressive realisation of human rights, including the right to social support, as outlined in Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi and international treaties that Malawi has signed up to. The provision of social support to poor and vulnerable households and individuals, as well as the need to adapt this support to increase disaster risk management are also prioritised in the MGDS III and the National

Resilience Strategy, 2018–2023. In addition, MNSSP II aligns with the National Agriculture Policy, 2016 by recognising the importance of the agricultural sector for improving food security. These policies emphasise the importance of breaking the cycle of recurring shocks and disasters and recognise the crucial contribution that social support makes to building the resilience of individuals, households and communities. The above policies complement one another and share the objective of increasing resilience to shocks, reducing chronic poverty, ensuring better alignment between development and humanitarian interventions and providing access to more predictable and resilient livelihoods.

MNSSP II is also in alignment with the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and its aspiration of ‘a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development’. The agenda calls for increasing the ‘standard of living of Africans by ensuring that the benefits of growth are widely shared’, and seeks to build ‘Africa’s human and social capital’ by extending the provision of social protection.

Strengthened social support will also contribute towards operationalising the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the implementation of SDGs 1 and 2 to end poverty and hunger. The implementation of MNSSP II will also contribute to the achievement of SDG 3 (good health and wellbeing), SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (reduced inequality) and SDG 13 (climate action).

1.3 Updating the MNSSP

MNSSP II was developed following an eight-month stakeholder-driven review of the design and implementation of the first MNSSP, and a subsequent three-month consultation process where the priority areas of MNSSP II were agreed. The process assessed whether or not and how the first MNSSP needed to be adjusted, and allowed all relevant stakeholders to feed into the updating process. MNSSP II was formulated based on these reviews and consultations and is fully aligned with the National Social Support Policy, 2012. It operationalises the aspirations of this policy and is a refinement of the first MNSSP based on the lessons learned and changes in Malawi’s social support landscape. The policy direction was provided by the Division of Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (PR&SP) in the Department of Economic Planning and Development (EP&D).

The review process assessed the performance of the individual programmes implemented under MNSSP against expected outcomes and strategic objectives, focussing on relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, institutional capacity and sustainability. In addition, institutional coordination and linkages with other relevant sectors were reviewed as well as the performance of MNSSP as a holistic programme. EP&D subsequently convened workshops on graduation from poverty, targeting the needy, vulnerability at different stages of people’s lives, food security and nutrition, harmonisation and systems and shock-sensitive social protection for further discussion and consultation.

Following this, stakeholders agreed that MNSSP II should focus on providing consumption support, building resilient livelihoods and increasing shock-sensitivity. System strengthening, including improved harmonisation, integration and coordination between programmes and monitoring were seen as crucial for ensuring the success of the new programme and to provide stronger policy direction and alignment with related policies.

1.4 Outline of MNSSP II

This MNSSP II document has six chapters. The introductory chapter gives the rationale for providing social support in Malawi and describes how the first MNSSP was updated to produce MSNNP II. Chapter 2 outlines the policy direction and guiding principles of Malawi's social support programme while Chapter 3 describes the country's poverty and vulnerability context, the main findings and recommendations from implementing the first MNSSP, and the rationale for shifting the focus from individual programmes to thematic priority areas. Chapter 4 gives an overview of the programme's three pillars and the issues they will address while Chapter 5 describes the main activity areas under each of the three pillars and the strengthening of the links between the different sub-programmes. The final chapter maps out how the overall system will be strengthened for the coordinated implementation of MNSSP II. The programme's five year implementation plan is given at Annex 1.

2 Policy Direction and Guiding Principles for MNSSP II

2.1 Policy Direction

MNSSP II operationalises the aspirations contained in the National Social Support Policy, 2012 in the form of a concrete social support programme for Malawi. The new programme is fully aligned with the National Social Support Policy, 2012 and has the same vision, mission, goal and strategic objectives (as follows).

2.1.1 Vision, mission and goal

Vision – Enhanced quality of life for those suffering from poverty and hunger, and improved resilience for those who are vulnerable to risks and shocks.

Mission – To provide and promote productivity-enhancing interventions and welfare support for the poor and vulnerable thereby facilitating the movement of people out of poverty and reducing the vulnerability of those in danger of falling into poverty.

Overall policy goal – Reduce poverty and enable the poor to move out of poverty and vulnerability.

2.1.2 Strategic objectives and policy themes

The National Social Support Policy and MNSSP II seek to realise the following four thematic aims to consolidate the aspirations contained in the vision and mission:

1. **To provide welfare support** to those who are unable to construct viable livelihoods.
2. **To protect the assets and improve the resilience** of poor and vulnerable households.
3. **To improve the productive capacity and asset base** of poor and vulnerable households for them to move above the poverty line.
4. **To establish coherent and progressive social support synergies** by ensuring strong positive linkages to influence economic and social policies and disaster risk reduction.

2.2 Guiding Principles

The National Social Support Policy, 2012 lists 10 guiding principles that steered the provision of social support through the first MNSSP. These have been developed (as follows) to guide programme design and delivery under MNSSP II:

1. **Leadership** – The Government of the Republic of Malawi is the custodian of MNSSP II and will provide overall leadership by setting the policy direction and facilitating coordination, alignment, and long-term support from all actors.
2. **Need and evidence-based** – Programming under MNSSP II will be based on evidence and will respond to people’s food and income needs across their life cycles (i.e. from young to old age) on the basis of an analysis of who needs

support, what type of assistance is needed, when and for how long, and where and why. Identified needs will drive interventions under the thematic areas and cost-effectiveness will be considered.

3. **Beneficiary preferences prioritised** – Beneficiaries will be informed, consulted and involved in designing, planning, implementing and monitoring MNSSP II.
4. **Support and promotion of resilient livelihoods** – In addition to providing welfare support to the ultra-poor, MNSSP II will support and promote interventions to help the poor access pathways to graduate from poverty and reduce their vulnerability to risks and livelihood shocks.
5. **Tackling social exclusion and marginalisation** – MNSSP II will address social as well as economic and natural vulnerabilities by protecting disempowered groups and those most exposed to disaster risks such as vulnerable women and children, and people living disabilities and HIV/AIDS against discrimination and exploitation.
6. **Timely, harmonised and reliable support** – Support and transfers to the poor and vulnerable will be provided in a timely and predictable way and be of adequate value. They must be provided on the basis of increasingly harmonised coordination, implementation, and delivery mechanisms that allow for the expansion of systems in a shock-sensitive manner.
7. **Realising rights** – MNSSP II will promote the progressive realisation of human rights, especially the right to social support, as articulated in Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi and other relevant treaties and instruments.
8. **Accountable and transparent** – The implementation of MNSSP II will be transparent by incorporating the accurate and timely dissemination of information, publicising abuses of the system, disclosing the contract terms and unit costs of NGOs and private agencies who administer social support, and through the transparent procurement of services. The targeting of beneficiaries will be fair and equitable and must be seen to be fair and equitable.
9. **Common financial management, reporting and monitoring and evaluation guidelines** – The government and partners involved in MNSSP II will commit to a common set of financial management, audit, progress, monitoring and evaluation and reporting processes, consistent with international guidelines and indicators.
10. **Common and sustainable long-term funding** – Mechanisms will be instituted to ensure that social support receives predictable and institutionalised funding that is sustainable over the long-term. The mechanism should be under government control with built in safeguards against fiduciary risks.

3 Background

3.1 Poverty and Vulnerability

Many households in Malawi are vulnerable to being or becoming poor due to low household incomes, food insecurity related to seasonal patterns of production that are rainfall dependent, and low ownership of productive assets. These and other causes of vulnerability are exacerbated by climatic shocks such as floods and droughts, which are becoming more frequent, variable and intense. Given the high levels of poverty and vulnerability in Malawi, exposure to even moderate shocks, including seasonal production shortfalls, frequently have disastrous impacts on households. The widespread prevalence of the factors that cause poverty limits opportunities for wealth creation and supports the case for strengthening social support systems in Malawi.

In 2010, the Integrated Household Survey estimated that 50.7% of the population lived below the national poverty line of MK 37,002 (at 2010 prices), down slightly from 52.4% in 2005. This figure would have risen to over 80% if the international poverty line of US\$2 a day was applied. The survey also found that whilst the poverty rate had slightly fallen, the proportion of the population classified as ultra-poor had risen by 2.2 percentage points to 24.5% between 2005 and 2010. The Human Development Report of 2016 used 2013/14 data to estimate that 56.1% of Malawi's population were multi-dimensionally poor while an additional 27.2% were just above the multi-dimensional poverty threshold. The Multi-dimensional Poverty Index identifies multiple overlapping deprivations suffered by households related to education, health and living standards.

MNSSP II builds on the definitions of poverty and vulnerability articulated in the Integrated Household Survey. Poor households are defined as those with less than minimum acceptable food consumption and that do not meet their basic needs as defined by the national poverty line. Factors that affect the level of household poverty are household size, level of education, access to non-farm employment, access to irrigation, proximity to markets and trading centres and access to good roads.

It is important to note that poverty is dynamic, with individuals and households sometimes shifting from one poverty category to another and in and out of poverty. This can be due to 'idiosyncratic shocks' (i.e. household-level shocks, such as death, injury or unemployment) or seasonal or unpredictable 'covariate shocks' (i.e. shocks felt by communities as a whole such as natural disasters or epidemics) that can cause the non-poor to fall into poverty.

Poor households can be divided into two sub-groups:

- **Ultra-poor households** are unable to afford the minimum basket of basic food items and often have little land, livestock or other durable assets. In addition, their members may be chronically ill or have a high dependency ratio or be headed by a child, female or elderly person. Their extreme poverty increases their vulnerability to shocks and limits their coping mechanisms. They therefore require year-round support.
- **Moderately poor households** normally consume more than the minimum basket of food but live below the national poverty line. They are thus poor, but not ultra-poor. They may be able to meet some of their basic needs but remain significantly deprived

and unable to afford all needed food and non-food items. These households are vulnerable to seasonal fluctuation and require assistance, especially, but not exclusively, during such times of need.

Vulnerability is the quality or the state of being exposed to risks and potentially harmful states such as poverty and the ability to withstand shocks. Rising vulnerability implies both the increased likelihood of shocks taking place, and a declining ability to withstand shocks, which reduces individual and community-wide coping strategies, with negative impacts on long term development. There are many sources of vulnerability and they can affect households and individuals differently. The following are the main types of vulnerabilities faced by people in Malawi:

- **Agricultural vulnerability** – The reliance of many Malawians on subsistence agriculture means that the impact of covariate shocks has profound implications for the security of their livelihoods and welfare both directly in the form of lost harvests and indirectly through increased food prices and reduced incomes. Since livelihood diversification outside agriculture is very limited, any agriculture-related shock such as erratic rainfall, diminished water resources, warmer temperatures, soil degradation, land constraints, and constrained access to fertilizers, other inputs and credit usually affects food security and household well-being as a result of households producing insufficient food or not having money to buy it.
- **Economic shocks and processes** – The volatility of the poverty status of some households, as they move below and above the poverty line from time to time, is usually caused by a combination of aggregate and idiosyncratic shocks including the weak input and output markets, poor crop yields, job losses and unstable market prices. Another important cause is poor people's very limited access to credit for financing their production.
- **Social vulnerability** – Some population groups are distinctly disadvantaged due to marginalisation, exclusion, violence, abuse and exploitation. Since wellbeing is associated with the ability to work and fulfil various roles in society, those living with disabilities and households headed by women, children or old persons are particularly vulnerable and more likely to fall into the poverty trap. Their access to basic services such as health care, education, and skills training is often restricted and their opportunities to secure enough income to meet their basic needs are limited.
- **Health, nutrition risks and HIV/AIDS** – Poor health or the death of productive adults can have large economic impacts on households due to the loss of labour and the associated medical and funeral costs, and because such households will often be preoccupied with caring for sick family members. Despite all health care being provided free in Malawi, poor people are disproportionately affected by poor health due to financial barriers related to transportation costs and other out-of-pocket payments that limits their access to health services. Accordingly, households faced with a high disease burden are often forced to abandon their productive activities which results in a downward spiral of impoverishment.
- **Demographic vulnerability** – There is evidence that households headed by women, children or the elderly are more vulnerable to a variety of shocks related to financial, cultural and social barriers due to unequal gender power relations and other inequalities. Most such households have limited labour capacity, which undermines

their ability to sustain viable independent livelihoods. They often have less time to pursue additional income generating activities, learn skills or participate in development programmes due to being overloaded with work and responsibilities, which limits their access to economic opportunities and makes them more in need of support. Further, high dependency ratios place more stress on income-earners, which perpetuates their vulnerability.

- **Life cycle vulnerability** – Individual crises suffered throughout the lives of individuals and households will often negatively impact human development. The diminished capacity to sustain livelihoods during early life, pregnancy, childhood, old age and at other times undercuts economic opportunities and security. A combination of low personal capabilities and a restricting physical and social environment can hold them back from taking advantage of opportunities and/or resilience to threats.

3.2 Review of Key Findings and Recommendations from the Implementation of MNSSP

In 2016, the government led a stakeholder-driven review to identify the achievements and challenges faced implementing the MNSSP. It assessed the performance of the social support programmes under MNSSP against strategic outcomes and objectives focussing on relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, institutional capacity and sustainability. The review evaluated the performance of the MNSSP system as a whole in terms of design, implementation and financing.

Most of the identified operational weaknesses are already being addressed. Of particular note is the development of the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR), which harmonises the targeting approach of most programmes; and the establishment of district social support committees to help coordinate and harmonise implementation across and even outside of MNSSP-related activities. These approaches have a huge potential to increase efficiency and operational economies of scale.

The following were the main system-level findings of the review:

- The MNSSP focused on the economic development aspects of social protection with only limited attention to human and social development.
- There is potential for fostering further integration and coordination across the different social support programmes including by more clearly defining complementarities and cross-cutting objectives.
- The primary and secondary objectives of social support programmes were often not clearly defined and not coherently supported by a theory of change.
- Communities were often unwilling to allow beneficiaries to participate in several different programmes at the same time as it was perceived as ‘double dipping’ and contradicted communities’ sense of fairness in the face of need. This prevented MNSSP from exploring and maximising the benefits of programme complementarity.
- The inadequate coverage of MNSSP considering the high poverty and vulnerability levels.
- Poverty targeting was problematic due to resistance by community leaders as most, or even all, community members were (and are) considered to be poor.

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- The low levels and unpredictability of the cash and in-kind transfers affected the overall impact of the system and needs addressing.
 - The implementation of MNSSP was fragmented due to ineffective national and district coordination structures, which led to reduced information sharing among and between sectors and programmes, and duplication and inconsistencies in interventions.
 - The low level of funding for social protection coupled with fragmented and uncoordinated financing arrangements by different donors.
 - The inadequate institutional, financial and human capacity in addition to the heavy reliance on community volunteers for implementing activities, especially at district level.
 - The programmes were often implemented with insufficient information management systems and a weak M&E framework.

The review came up with the following recommendations for MNSSP II:

- **Develop an integrated social protection system that specifies strategic actions for fulfilling programme objectives** through improved integration, coherence and harmonisation of and between different programmes.
- **Strengthen government ownership and leadership**, both in terms of setting the policy direction and providing financial support.
- **Build and strengthen intra- and inter-programme linkages** within and beyond MNSSP II by conceptualising, presenting, and implementing all activities as a holistic package of interventions.
- Develop a programme that maximises poverty and vulnerability alleviation **by getting the basics of consumption support right and increasing the coverage** of interventions.
- Develop a **promotive social protection pillar** to build resilient livelihoods through sustained **support for economic empowerment and productivity, as well as long-term investments in human and natural capital.**
- **Streamline and strengthen institutional coordination mechanisms at national and district levels.** Accordingly, build the capacity across government at all levels of these structures.
- **Improve the M&E system** for MNSSP II and develop strong accountability mechanism with clear indicators to track and review progress.
- **Increase the shock-sensitivity of MNSSP II** by establishing scalable mechanisms through closer alignment and coordination with the humanitarian sector.

4 Overview of MNSSP II

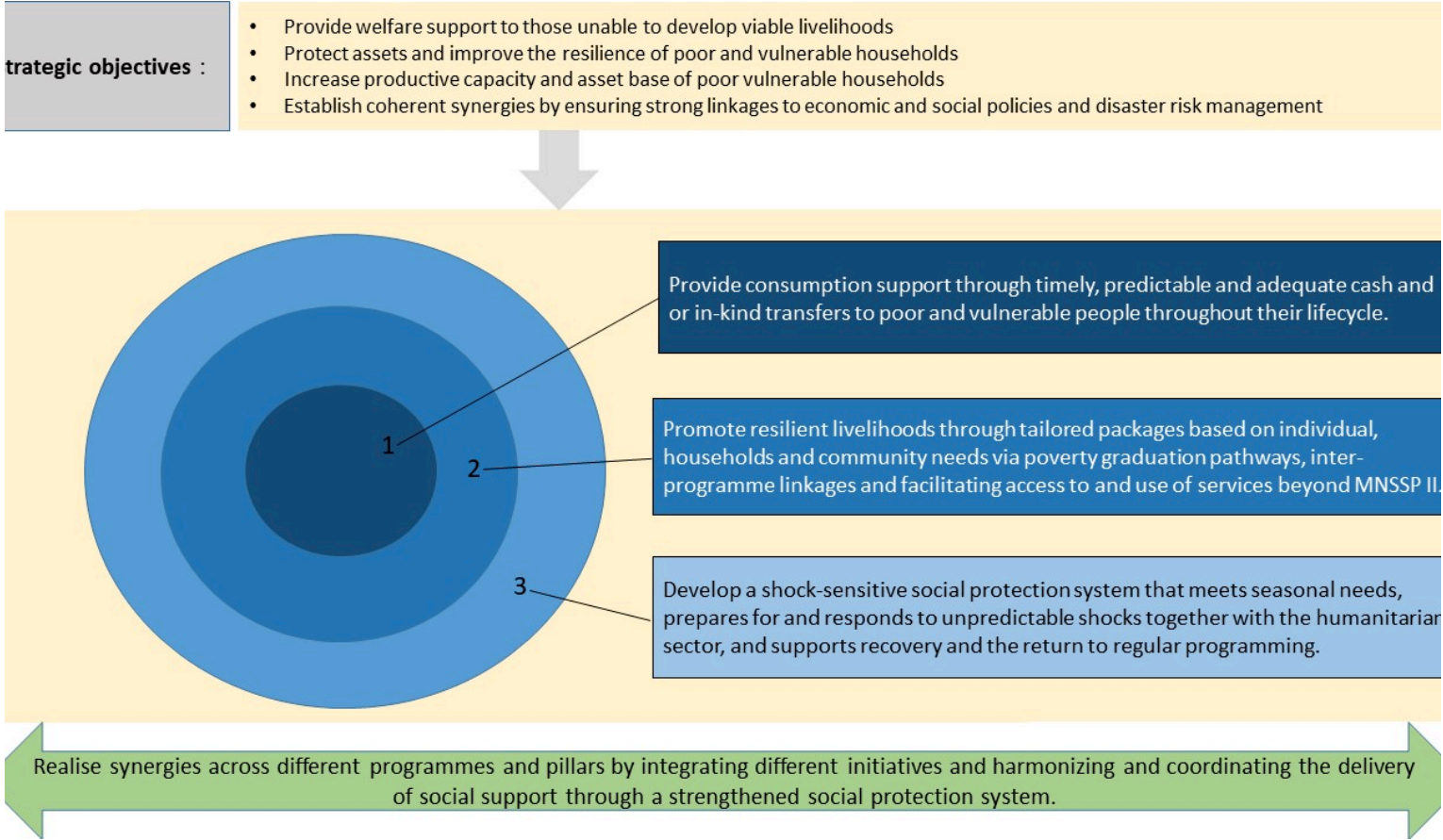
Building on the review findings and lessons learned, MNSSP II has been organised around three thematic pillars. The shift to thematic priority areas away from the individual social support programmes in the first MNSSP should facilitate the greater alignment of individual programmes to achieve the overall objectives. In addition, the new programme provides clear strategic policy guidance on promoting linkages, strengthening systems and improving the monitoring of social protection activities that lie outside MNSSP II.

Three thematic pillars have been identified to achieve the strategic objectives of the National Social Support Policy, 2012 and address the challenges related to the design and implementation of the first MNSSP. Each pillar has a strategic objective that addresses a specific need of poor and vulnerable individuals and households (see Chapter 5). The idea is that most households require support across all three pillars depending on their characteristics, needs, and the environment in which they live. Programmes should therefore seek to ensure, as appropriate, that they address all three pillars.

The following three pillars provide a coherent and flexible approach under a single programme (MNSSP II) to provide complementary social support in Malawi (see Figure 1).

- **Pillar 1: Consumption support** to enable households to meet their basic needs, including for food security, shelter, education and health in order to provide a minimum of protection to shield households from the most immediate form of deprivation.
- **Pillar 2: Resilient livelihoods** support as consumption support alone is rarely sufficient to enable households to access more resilient livelihoods. Participating households will be supported to develop viable livelihood strategies through the provision of training and by facilitating them to access pro-poor markets and value chains.
- **Pillar 3: Shock-sensitive social protection** to ensure that poverty reduction and human capital development gains are protected against shocks by preventing, mitigating, and, if needed, responding swiftly to shocks.

Figure 1: Overview of MNSSP II



4.1 Overview of Pillar 1: Consumption Support

Chronic poverty and food insecurity prevail across Malawi. They affect both labour-constrained and unconstrained households and make them vulnerable to shocks, especially as most households generally depend on rainfed subsistence agriculture and informal labour (*ganyu*) to meet their basic consumption needs for food and non-food items. This pillar has the protective function of social protection, which cuts across all MNSSP II programmes. The activities under this pillar will provide consumption and income support to enable households to meet their basic needs, including food security, improved nutritional intake, shelter, education and health during the different stages of individuals’ lives.

Note that whilst most existing programmes have a consumption support component, they also pursue additional objectives that align with other programme pillars.

Furthermore, increased coordination with interventions outside the realm of social support is needed as is the increased coverage and adequacy of benefits for a more coordinated approach and to provide social support in the different situations that individuals face in the course of their lives.

The Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), public works programmes (PWPs) and school meal programmes (SMPs) provide direct consumption support and are therefore the focus of Pillar 1. These programmes reduce consumption gaps by providing food and/or cash transfers and can reduce poverty.

The SCTP provides monthly cash transfers to ultra-poor and labour constrained households to enable them to increase household expenditure. It aims to reduce the poverty of ultra-poor labour-constrained households, i.e. households with no able-bodied members aged 19 to 64 or have a dependency ratio of 1:4 (or more) able-bodied adults of working age to dependants. Note that dependants include adults between 19 and 25 years who are in full-time education.

Public work programmes provide cash and/or in-kind support in exchange for labour from ultra-poor and poor household members. The short-term objective is to provide consumption support, whilst the longer-term objectives include increasing the resilience of participating household members by enabling them to build and create productive assets, skills and livelihoods. Participants generally need to be involved in such programmes for longer periods for sustainable impacts.

School meals programmes help meet education and nutritional needs. Implementation is through either centralised procurement where produce is bought centrally and distributed to participating schools or by schools growing food crops or being provided with funds to source produce locally.

4.2 Overview of Pillar 2: Resilient Livelihoods

This pillar focuses on supporting individuals and households to build resilient livelihoods, i.e. livelihoods that can withstand small shocks and that eventually no longer require direct consumption support to remain viable. To develop resilient livelihoods households need sufficient incomes (or consumption support) over a long period to allow for investments, risk taking, and the slow but steady development of viable livelihood strategies. Better links with other programmes under and outside MNSSP will help address nutritional problems and further support households to develop resilient livelihoods. In addition, households will be supported to access services in order to develop their human capital. Greater attention will be paid to gender specific challenges in programme design and implementation in recognition of poor women being particularly vulnerable.

Pillar 2 promotes the following three areas for building resilient livelihoods:

- Pathways to graduate from poverty supported by productive asset and skill development programmes.
- Inter-programme linkages for greater impacts.
- Improved access to services that contribute to resilient livelihoods including nutrition, health and education.

‘Graduation pathways’ are means of promoting the economic and social empowerment of the poor to sustainably move out of multi-dimensional poverty. Associated interventions may include building assets and skills, diversifying livelihoods and promoting income generating activities, including starting small businesses, all of which need to be tailored around local contexts and the differing needs and capacities of individuals, households and communities. Graduation support therefore needs to comprise a mix of interventions including at least the following:

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- Regular consumption support to safeguard households' productive assets and prevent asset depletion during times of financial distress.
 - The promotion of savings and access to other types of financial services to build resilience to shocks.
 - Training on financial literacy and business and technical skills to stimulate entrepreneurial activities.
 - Seed capital to support income generating activities.
 - Business coaching to individuals and households.

Additional interventions could include facilitating access to pro-poor markets and value chains, skills and training aimed at increasing the human capital of participants and supporting joint efforts for mutual benefit. Links with other programmes that support income generating activities, especially in the agricultural sector, are also very important to support households. This pillar also recognises that resilient livelihoods are underpinned by healthy, well-nourished and educated populations. The development of long-term sustainable livelihoods and graduation from poverty requires support for access to and the use of basic services including education, health care, sexual and reproductive health and nutrition. Increased access to relevant interventions will be facilitated.

On the demand side, many vulnerable households lack the awareness and funds to access basic services. In this regard, the role of social protection is to address the access constraints faced by the poorest and most vulnerable people. Social support programmes should be designed for building human capital and improving access to services. Notwithstanding challenges with the supply of basic services, increased access to them will improve the long-term human capital development of poor and vulnerable households.

And programme beneficiaries may suffer shocks and setbacks at any time. It is therefore vital to ensure that they also have access to protective social protection interventions and that appropriate mechanisms are in place to monitor their well being. The SCTP, public works programmes, savings and loan groups and micro-finance institutions all support household livelihood strategies or seek to increase their resilience to shocks. In addition, new programmes should address gaps in coverage and the types of support provided under the first MNSSP. In this sense, Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 are conceived as complementary pillars.

4.3 Overview of Pillar 3: Shock-Sensitive Social Protection

Underlying food insecurity and seasonal patterns of production and consumption in Malawi result in recurrent crises and hinder long term poverty reduction. These problems are compounded by the country's vulnerability to variations in climate that cause floods, dry spells and droughts, thus creating frequent shocks. As such, predictable seasonal patterns (such as the harvest and lean seasons), and even minor weather variations, can lead to humanitarian emergencies. The interventions under this pillar are intended to protect gains made under Pillars 1 and 2 by offering additional assistance when shocks occur and by allowing programmes to subsequently continue their regular activities.

This pillar outlines how MNSSP II can better protect individuals, households and communities that are affected by cyclical livelihood shocks and seasonal vulnerability and the larger

unpredictable shocks that may require the expansion of social protection measures alongside humanitarian interventions.

Whilst seasonal variations are predictable, shocks are not. It is in this context that the Government of Malawi includes the following approaches in its social protection system to address covariate shocks in coordination with the humanitarian sector:

- Promote resilience to shocks in anticipation of crises to prevent and mitigate the impact of shocks by reducing poverty, promoting household coping capacities, (e.g. savings mechanisms and increasing productivity) and by diversifying livelihoods.
- Prepare for shocks by, for example, planning and coordinating interventions in advance of shocks.
- Support households to meet their immediate needs in response to shocks by, for example, scaling up social protection programmes to reach larger proportions of affected populations and increasing cash and in-kind transfers to programme participants when shocks occur.
- Support recovery efforts by, for example, promoting the ‘building back better’ approach whereby programmes support increased resilience to shocks (directly linked to prevention and mitigation).

5 Thematic Pillars, Strategic Objectives and Actions

MNSSP II will operationalise the National Social Support Policy, 2012 under its consumption support, resilient livelihoods and shock-sensitive social protection pillars. This chapter outlines the strategic objectives and actions under each pillar.

5.1 Pillar 1: Consumption Support

Pillar 1 focuses on the protective function of social protection, which cuts across all programmes under MNSSP II.

Strategic objective 1: Provide consumption support through timely, predictable, and adequate cash and/or in-kind transfers to poor and vulnerable people throughout their life cycles.

5.1.1 General strategic actions

1. **Increase the coverage and reach of existing programmes** – Gradually increase the percentage of households provided with consumption support and the geographical reach of programmes.
2. **Regularly review and revise the value of transfers to ensure their real value is in line with households' needs** – Regularly review and if necessary adjust transfers to enable households to meet their basic food and non-food needs. The preferred form of support is usually cash, although this may vary depending on context and needs.
3. **Improve the design and implementation of programmes to extend the coverage of social protection programmes across people's life cycles** – Identify and address gaps in coverage at all stages of people's lives and improve the development and implementation of existing programmes. Pay particular attention to gender specific needs in programme development and implementation.
4. **Strengthen the alignment of core protective programmes** – Strengthen the alignment of core protective programmes with each other (mainly SCTP, school meals programmes and public works programmes) to provide coherent social protection coverage for poor and vulnerable people. The improved alignment of programmes will allow poor and vulnerable households to move between programmes as their needs change.
5. **Improve awareness and understanding of the beneficiary selection process and strengthen transparency** – Improve the understanding of communities of the beneficiary selection process and explain the process to them in relation to local perceptions of vulnerability and poverty. Increase the transparency of selection by sensitising communities to recognise the neediest and to ensure the participation of all vulnerable people, including women and people with disabilities.
6. **Develop accountability systems, including harmonised grievance and appeals mechanisms for all core programmes** – Develop mechanisms to hold implementing agencies and agents accountable at all levels of functioning of the MNSSP II. Establish or strengthen grievance and appeals mechanisms at community, district and central levels to enable community members to complain about programme selection and

implementation including the illegitimate capture of the targeting process. Ensure that such mechanisms are fit for purpose and facilitate the participation of women and vulnerable people.

7. **Strengthen delivery mechanisms for timely and reliable transfers** – In line with government policies, make cash transfers by e-payment to reduce delays and the administrative burden on district officials and community members and to negate the need to travel to collect transfers. These mechanisms should be designed to ensure that vulnerable people such as older community members are not disadvantaged or excluded.

5.1.2 SCTP-related strategic actions

1. **Base programme coverage on district level poverty and ultra-poverty profiles** – The existing nationwide coverage of SCTP should evolve towards providing adequate income and consumption support to the poorest and most vulnerable people, allowing for different coverage levels depending on district ultra-poverty and vulnerability profiles.
2. **Ensure timely, reliable, and adequate cash transfers** – Strengthen systems to ensure that SCTP payments are timely and reliable and address MNSSP II's objectives.

5.1.3 Public work programme-related strategic actions

1. **Ensure timely, reliable, and adequate cash and/or in-kind transfers** – Through participatory planning, promote public works norms based on seasonality and available labour capacity that respond to communities' needs. Ensure that participation in work programmes is adequate to meet the basic food and non-food needs of participating households.

5.1.4 School meal programme-related strategic actions

1. **Increase coverage** – Gradually increase the coverage of school meal programmes towards providing school meals to all primary school students. Ensure that adequate quantities and quality of food is provided and explore extending coverage to early childhood development centres.
2. **Develop a sustainable and cost-effective model for school meal programmes** – As far as possible while maintaining quality, procure goods and services locally to strengthen local productivity and value chains. Where local conditions do not support this approach, support a mix of local and central level procurement.
3. **Strengthen national ownership, commitment and the delivery capacity of school meals programmes** – As part of national efforts to make these programmes more sustainable, strengthen and develop national capacities and systems (including policies and strategies) for programme design, implementation and scale-up. This process should consider the different involved sectors (health, education, agriculture, etc.) and actors (individuals, communities, public sector, and private sector actors).

5.2 Pillar 2: Resilient Livelihoods

Pillar 2 focuses on pathways to graduate from poverty, intra and inter-programme linkages, and facilitating access to and the use of essential services. The focus will be on how programmes can build resilience related to the specific needs, opportunities and capacities of individuals, households and communities.

Strategic objective 2 – Promote resilient livelihoods through tailored packages based on individual, household, and community needs via poverty graduation pathways, inter-programme linkages and facilitating access to and the use of services beyond MNSSP II.

5.2.1 General strategic actions

1. **Develop multi-year programmes to provide resilient livelihoods**– Ensure that new and on-going programmes are designed to improve the resilience of participants and achieve better livelihood strengthening outcomes. Programmes should be tailored to needs, local livelihoods and environments, existing assistance and services offered, and the opportunities present at individual, household and community levels.
2. **Increase support for building resilient livelihoods** – Develop programmes to reflect the fact that training, skills development, asset creation and livelihood diversification are of crucial importance for building resilient livelihoods. And develop the monitoring system to track impacts throughout the programme, especially at outcome level to inform implementation.
3. **Increase the productivity of MNSSP II beneficiaries through the provision of tailored capacity building support** – Through linkages with other actors, provide information on and access to micro-finance, value addition farming opportunities and innovations. And link small scale farmers to markets and improve access to extension workers.
4. **Establish sustainable poverty graduation pathways** – Develop a strategy that addresses economic and multi-dimensional poverty through interventions tailored around individual, household and community needs to wean them off social support programmes and to make them financially self-sufficient wherever possible. Develop these interventions for greater women’s participation.

5.2.2 SCTP-related strategic actions

1. **Support SCTP participant households with additional livelihood and resilience support** – Provide beneficiaries with additional support to build resilient livelihoods tailored to their needs and capacities, including through facilitating access to and the use of services. In parallel, develop a strategy for households with limited capacity to develop resilient and sustainable livelihoods including but not limited to the SCTP linkage and referral system.

5.2.3 Public work programme-related strategic actions

1. **Improve coordination between different public works interventions in districts** – Better coordinate different district-level interventions for synergies and complementarities to build the resilience of households and communities.
2. **Improve the quality of assets** – Ensure that assets created through public works programmes are high quality; meet individual, household and local community needs; are relevant for current livelihood strategies and have clear sustainability plans.
3. **Improve the quality of training and address the skills needed for local livelihood strategies** – Ensure that public works programmes enhance investments in transferring skills that are relevant to locally viable and sustainable livelihood strategies.
4. **Promote sustainable livelihood options by applying the catchment management approach** – Apply a two-tier approach that provides short-term financial support and skills relevant for household livelihoods whilst simultaneously improving the resilience of communities against shocks and supporting the development of new livelihood opportunities.
5. **Support the use of new assets and skills for productive purposes** – Use the assets and skills resulting from public work programmes to support the development of more productive and diversified livelihoods.

5.2.4 School meal programme-related strategic actions

1. **Use local procurement options to create local livelihood opportunities** – Strengthen the role of MNSSP II programmes to support local productivity.

5.2.5 Saving and loan group and micro-finance institution-related strategic actions

1. **Increase the financial inclusion of the poor** – Facilitate the expansion of the coverage of savings and loan groups, the Community Savings and Investment Promotion (COMSIP) programme and micro-finance institutions for MNSSP II beneficiaries by improving the availability of and access to pro-poor micro-finance.
2. **Increase the impact on resilient livelihoods of financial inclusion for the poor** – Support the productivity of savings and investments through training and skills development. Register savings and loan groups at the district level and provide guidance on skills development and capacity building.

5.3 Pillar 3: Shock-Sensitive Social Protection

The aim of Pillar 3 is to protect the gains made under Pillars 1 and 2 by offering additional assistance when a shock occurs and by allowing programmes to subsequently continue their regular activities. A shock-sensitive social protection system would, over time, reduce the need for year-on-year emergency responses and the scale of emergency responses. Thus, this pillar calls for the social protection system to be leveraged in collaboration with the humanitarian sector in response to shocks.

Strategic objective 3 – Develop a shock-sensitive social protection system that meets seasonal needs, prepares for and responds to unpredictable shocks together with the humanitarian sector, and supports recovery and the return to regular programming.

5.3.1 General strategic actions

1. **Develop a vision for shock-sensitive social protection** – Develop a vision for social protection that builds on existing systems, addresses seasonal needs and enables expansion during humanitarian emergencies. The vision should be informed by joint learning and evidence creation between the social protection and humanitarian sectors.
2. **Institutionalise a coordination structure to improve collaboration and communication between humanitarian and social protection actors under the leadership of EP&D and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA)** – Establish clear roles and responsibilities and allow for cross-linkages at central and district levels for coordinated action.
3. **Improve the role of MNSSP II on ensuring preparedness and responsiveness to, and recovery from, shocks through the following actions:**
 - i. **Include shock-sensitivity as an objective and approach in MNSSP II programmes** – Put a more explicit focus on preparedness, response and recovery to enable the rapid return to regular programming by improving intra- and inter-programme linkages.
 - ii. **Include responses to predictable seasonal needs in MNSSP II** – Do this by re-prioritising and adapting activities for the period and/or increasing assistance (e.g. seasonal top-ups for cash transfer programmes) during pre-determined periods, using the most appropriate transfer modalities.
 - iii. **Leverage programmes and systems to respond to emergencies** – Scale up existing programmes to allow for vertical and horizontal expansion linked to humanitarian plans and actions during large-scale shocks.
 - iv. **Prioritise highly vulnerable and hazard-prone districts in the development and operationalisation of the shock-sensitive system** – Use hazard and vulnerability assessments to inform the design, implementation and links of programmes under MNSSP II with the humanitarian sector for the coverage of vulnerable geographical areas.
 - v. **Use measurable triggers in early warning information systems to support preparedness, responsiveness and recovery by overlapping data on shocks with geo-location in the Unified Beneficiary Registry** – Use historical data on the most common hazard risks to define triggers for action that can be embedded into forecasts to predict shocks and mobilise adequate responses.
 - vi. **Create a pooled contingency fund to support the short-term expansion of MNSSP II support in times of imminent or reoccurring shocks** – Create a flexible financing mechanism as part of the Social Support Fund to fund the horizontal or vertical expansion of MNSSP II support during times when

community needs are large (i.e. in the dry and pre-harvest seasons) or during unpredictable shocks.

5.3.2 SCTP-related strategic actions

1. **Allow for seasonal top-ups** – Develop plans and mechanisms within the SCTP to support seasonal increases of the level of transfers to better protect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and households during the lean season.
2. **Adapt programme design to enable it to scale-up in times of unpredictable crises** – Develop plans and mechanisms to allow for the vertical and horizontal expansion of SCTP during large-scale shocks and humanitarian crises in coordination with humanitarian responses and based on objectives and measurable triggers and indicators.

5.3.3 Public work programme-related strategic actions

1. **Increase the focus on household and community level asset creation to contribute to disaster risk reduction** – Adjust the development and implementation of public works programmes to focus on disaster risk reduction by promoting the catchment management approach. Build skills to ensure the quality and sustainability of created assets.
2. **Strengthen the role of public works on providing adequate support considering the needs and capacity of households at times of recurring and unpredictable shocks** – Schedule interventions in anticipation and response to shocks, and make sure that work norms are in line with the needs and capacities of households. Activities and transfers should contribute to the protection and recovery of livelihoods thereby building resilience.
3. **Link public works interventions that build communal assets to disaster response and post-disaster reconstruction programmes** – Target shock-affected areas for public works interventions for disaster responses and post-disaster reconstruction. Target public works beneficiary and non-beneficiary households (with labour opportunities) in shock response and recovery efforts.

5.3.4 School meals programmes-related strategic actions

1. **Expand the programme to account for needs during shocks** – Systematise arrangements in regular operations for assistance during reoccurring or unpredictable shocks in hard-hit areas that are not covered by school meals programmes, making use of wet meals and/or take-home rations, as appropriate.

5.3.5 Savings and loan groups and micro-finance institutions

1. **Promote savings to increase resilience to shocks** – Support households to build up cash savings that allow them to smooth their consumption in times of shocks.

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2. **Adapt trainings and activities to promote share-outs during times of increased need to smoothen consumption** – Encourage the timing of fund share-outs to occur during critical periods to provide funds for consumption smoothening.
 3. **Adapt micro-finance institution services, including products and assistance provided, to help households use them to manage risks** – Build awareness on using financial services to manage risks and withstand shocks. This could include using loans and insurance money to invest in disaster risk reduction strategies to transfer risks.

5.4 Linkages for a Coherent and Effective Social Support System

This section outlines existing and planned links within MNSSP II and other relevant interventions and services outside MNSSP II and between MNSSP II and the humanitarian sectors. It is very important, given the limited resources available for social support in Malawi and the high levels of poverty and vulnerability, to exploit and realise linkages to maximise impacts. Clearly conceptualised and institutionalised linkages are key to address multi-dimensional deprivation and provide adequate consumption support, develop resilient livelihoods and build a shock-sensitive social protection system.

5.4.1 Links to strengthen consumption support

The following existing and planned links between the SCTP, public works programmes and school meals programmes will form the basis for coherent and effective consumption support to poor and vulnerable individuals and households:

1. **Establish systems and linkages to facilitate the contribution of public works programmes to school meal programmes** – Develop a coherent approach and system for public works programmes to contribute to home-grown school feeding by providing labour for school meal programmes.

5.4.2 Links to build resilient livelihoods

The following existing and planned links between MNSSP II programmes and other interventions and services will form the basis for building resilient livelihoods:

1. **Link MNSSP II programmes to support the development of resilient livelihoods**
 - i. Link MNSSP II beneficiaries, in particular SCTP and public works programme beneficiaries, to savings and loan groups and micro-finance institution services to improve access to savings, insurance and credit.
 - ii. Align public works interventions in districts and ensure better coordination to encourage synergies and complementarities in household and community-level resilience building.
 - iii. Promote local procurement to develop productive communities and markets.
2. **Establish links with other national programmes and services that build resilient livelihoods through increased productivity**

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- i. Link MNSSP II beneficiaries, in particular from SCTP and public works programmes, to programmes and services that provide agricultural support, such as the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) and agricultural extension services in line with the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP).
 - ii. Link MNSSP II beneficiaries, in particular from SCTP and public works programmes, to trainings on local livelihood strategies, income generating activities and business and financial literacy skills. Ensure the active participation of women and other vulnerable groups.
 - 3. Establish links with other national programmes and services that help build long-term resilient livelihoods through enhanced access to and use of essential services**
 - i. Facilitate access to education amongst relevant sub-groups of MNSSP II households.
 - ii. Facilitate access to and the use of basic health care services by MNSSP II households, including sexual and reproductive health services.
 - iii. Facilitate access to nutritional interventions for relevant sub-groups of MNSSP II beneficiaries.

5.4.3 Links to support shock-sensitive social protection

The following existing and planned linkages between MNSSP II and the humanitarian sector will form the basis of Malawi's system of shock-sensitive social protection:

- 1. Establish coordination and communication structures between humanitarian and social protection actors under the leadership of EP&D and DoDMA** – Establish clear roles and responsibilities in a shock-sensitive framework and allow for links across structures at central and district levels for coordinated actions.
- 2. Institutionalise links with the humanitarian sector to enable scaling up in times of crisis as a part of streamlining preparedness** – Develop plans and mechanisms to allow for the vertical and horizontal expansion of programmes during shocks and humanitarian crises.
- 3. Establish links between harmonised social support committees at district and community levels and humanitarian structures** – Create clear and institutionalised links between social support committees and humanitarian structures to enhance coordination and information sharing.
- 4. Link public works interventions that build communal assets to disaster response and post-disaster reconstruction programmes** – Target shock-affected areas for public works interventions for disaster responses and post-disaster reconstruction. Target public works beneficiary and non-beneficiary households (with labour opportunities) in shock response and recovery efforts.
- 5. Link the Unified Beneficiary Registry database to the humanitarian sector** – Use the registry to target participants for social protection and emergency responses through data triangulation. Increase the percentage of registered households to 80% or 100%

(depending on available resources). In future link the registry to national identity cards.

6 System Strengthening

The review and stakeholder consultations on the achievements of the first MNSSP (2012–2016) found that the individual programmes under it worked largely in isolation with their own systems, lines of reporting and accountability mechanisms. Whilst substantial progress was made, individual programmes were primarily accountable to their line ministries and donors, used different targeting approaches, collected different M&E data and adhered to different donor reporting requirements. And there were considerable capacity gaps at all levels that led to inefficiencies and hampered harmonisation and coordination across the programme. There is thus a need for clear lines of accountability and joint delivery systems in order to create synergies and harmony to coordinate the delivery of MNSSP II, rather than the individual social support programmes.

This chapter focuses on strengthening government leadership, promoting a coherent social support policy, ensuring programme coordination and encouraging harmonised, effective and efficient implementation.

6.1 Cross-cutting Strategic Actions for System Strengthening

The following cross-cutting actions will strengthen the system for coordinated implementation of MNSSP II and help achieve the needed levels of integration and harmonisation on programme implementation.

1. **Strengthen the capacity of the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (PR&SP) Division to provide strong leadership for implementing MNSSP II** – Increase staffing levels and improve the availability of resources for coordinating functions across different programmes. Clarify and reinforce the roles, responsibilities and reporting lines with other line ministries involved in delivering social support.
2. **Strengthen the oversight function of the MNSSP steering and technical committees** – Streamline membership and improve the level of representation of key stakeholders on the National Social Support Steering Committee (NSSSC).
3. **Strengthen national level technical working groups and align them with the integrated nature of MNSSP II** – The MNSSP Technical Committee will continue to be the key mechanism for coordination and information sharing at national level between stakeholders. It will meet four times a year throughout the MNSSP II period. Programme thematic working groups will be maintained to support the Technical Committee by providing fora for early in-depth discussions on priority issues.
4. **Establish and strengthen harmonised coordination and implementation structures at district and community levels** – District social support committees (DSSCs) and community social support committees (CSSC) will play an important role as focal points for coordination between local government agencies, potentially acting as ‘one-stop shops’ for referrals and information on social support and other sectoral programmes. They will be provided with clear terms of references and reporting modalities.
5. **Improve institutional coordination and information sharing between community, district and national levels** – Enhance the functioning of vertical coordination structures between community, district and national levels, and improve

accountability and information sharing. Establish formal reporting arrangements on social support implementation among CSSCs, DSSCs, line ministries and the PR&SP Division.

6. **Align and harmonise programme implementation modalities for all programmes under MNSSP II** – Where possible adopt integrated implementation mechanisms and national institutional frameworks regardless of financing sources.
7. **Improve the participation of women in decision making across MNSSP II** – Increase the voice and participation of women across the different parts of MNSSP II. In particular, ensure that eligibility criteria for participation in decision making bodies do not hinder the participation of women.
8. **Develop a harmonised grievance and appeals mechanisms to increase accountability on programme functioning at all levels** – In addition to the grievance and appeals mechanisms, create annual community-focused reviews of the functioning of MNSSP II facilitated by civil society organisations. Ensure the meaningful participation of women and other vulnerable people in all such processes.
9. **Invest in technical, human resource and operational capacity at all levels** – Develop and implement a prioritised and systematic strategy to strengthen the capacities of coordination and implementation structures at national, district and community levels.
10. **Establish a Social Support Fund to ensure adequate sustainable investment from government and non-government sources** – Such a fund should help harmonise financial procedures and include a contingency fund for shock-sensitive social protection. Also, develop a strategy to mobilise national resources for social support.
11. **Lobby and mobilise resources for the MNSSP II** – Lobby and mobilise resources required for effective implementation of MNSSP II. Resource not only refers to funds, but also human resources, goods and services.
12. **Develop a communication strategy for MNSSP II** – This strategy will be implemented with clear communication messages across a range of communication media as appropriate for target audiences.

6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E) will accompany programme implementation. An M&E framework will be developed to track and review progress against performance targets and indicators. The government will use M&E reports to design and plan subsequent or follow-up programmes.

The monitoring of specific interventions and programmes will be done by the implementing agencies (ministries). However, EP&D, as the coordinating agency of the MNSSP, in close cooperation with other stakeholders will coordinate, oversee and provide technical advice on M&E.

The following M&E strategic actions will be implemented:

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1. **Strengthen MNSSP II M&E systems and capacities** – This will ensure that there is a shift towards a more evidence based policy approach and at the same time improve the contribution of M&E to the process of enhancing the effectiveness of the MNSSP II.

Annex 1: The MNSSP II Implementation Plan