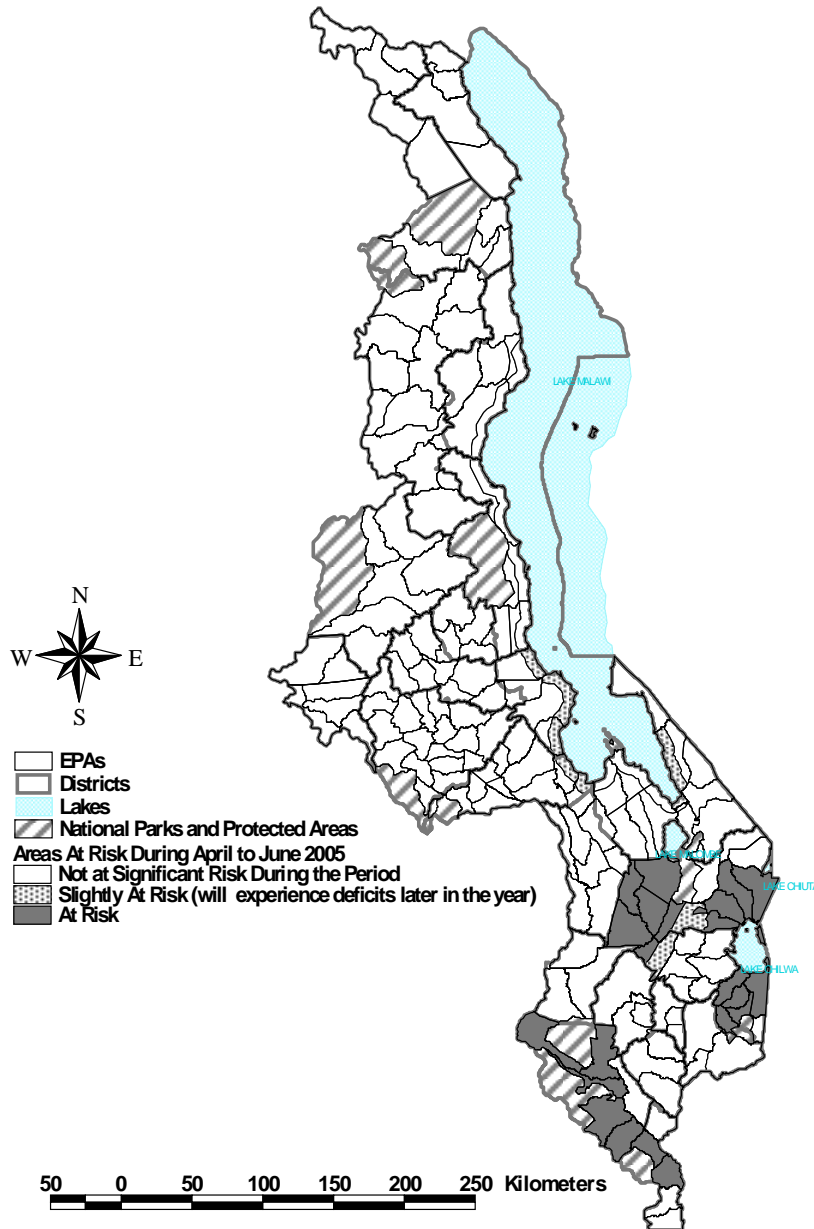


Food Security Indicative Report

Malawi

April 2005

Food Deficit Areas: April 2005 – June 2005



MALAWI
Vulnerability
Assessment Committee

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In collaboration with

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Acknowledgements

The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) would like to thank the following participants and their organisations, who contributed to researching, analysing, writing up and presenting the information in this report:

- Walusungu Kayira (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development)
- Charles Rethman (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development/Save the Children US)
- Max Wengawenga (Ministry of Agriculture)
- Philemon Siwinda (National Statistics Office)
- Simon Mulungu (Department of Poverty and Disaster Management Affairs)
- Gift Mafuleka (Department of Poverty and Disaster Management Affairs)
- Sam Chimwaza (FEWS-NET)
- Evance Chapasuka (FEWS-NET)
- Moses Kachale (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development)
- Susanne Wiebe (United Nations Development Programme)
- Masozi Kachale (World Food Programme)
- Sarah Kaphamtengo (World Food Programme)
- Tesfai Gherrmazien (Food and Agriculture Organization)
- Ceasar Kachale (Food and Agriculture Organization)
- Neil Fisher (Action Against Hunger)
- Roslyn Harper (Concern Worldwide)

In addition, the following agencies assisted the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee by providing the data that much of this analysis is based upon:

- The National Statistics Office
- The Ministry of Agriculture
- The Department of Poverty and Disaster Management Affairs
- The Ministry of Health
- Action Against Hunger
- World Food Programme
- FEWS-NET

The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee thanks all partners who have generously contributed funding towards this report: DFID, the European Union, and FEWS-NET.

This document contains the views and findings of the MVAC but does not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Malawi, any single member of the MVAC or any of the donors or funding agencies.

Introduction

From February 2005 much of Malawi experienced severe dry spells that are expected to affect crop production, especially maize and key cash crops. The damage is feared to be so severe that in some parts of the country the poorest and most vulnerable households are even at risk of facing food deficits during the April to June 2005 harvest period. The worst affected areas are in the south.

Following an outcry from stakeholders on the potential short-term needs and, given the poor harvest prospects and the fact that the full Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) assessment results will not be available until sometime towards the end of May or early June, the MVAC decided to investigate whether and where there might be food entitlement deficits so early on in the agricultural consumption year. This led to this indicative analysis, which is based on a rapid assessment carried out by the MoA.

It must be stressed that the results presented in this analysis are based on a very rapid assessment of the crop production and are therefore only indicative. A more accurate projection of the vulnerability status covering the 2005/06 agricultural consumption year will be only available following more extensive secondary data analysis coupled with field assessments planned by the MVAC in April.

Objective and activities

The MVAC used the livelihoods-based vulnerability approach (LBVA) in this exercise, drawing on a range of secondary data to gain a preliminary indication of whether and where households are likely to face food shortages during the months of April, May and June 2005. However, given the composition of MVAC membership, some members had conducted some rapid field visits prior to this exercise. Their experiences helped in corroborating the results. The main activities included:

- Collecting, arranging and pre-analysing secondary data
- Conducting a “class-room” vulnerability analysis exercise and assembling the results

The analysis is based on the MVAC’s livelihood zones, which are geographical areas where the majority of households have similar livelihoods or similar options for obtaining food and income, as well as similar expenditure patterns. Once the analysis is complete, the results are converted back into administrative units.

Results

Problem definition

Changes in each of the important elements that households employ to get their food or income, or in their expenditure patterns, are referred to as ‘problem specifications’. These are normally expressed as a ratio of this year over ‘normal’, as a percentage. For example, if an area obtains 120 MT of a crop instead of the ‘normal’ 200 MT, the problem specification will be 60%.

Table I – Production in percent of the normal

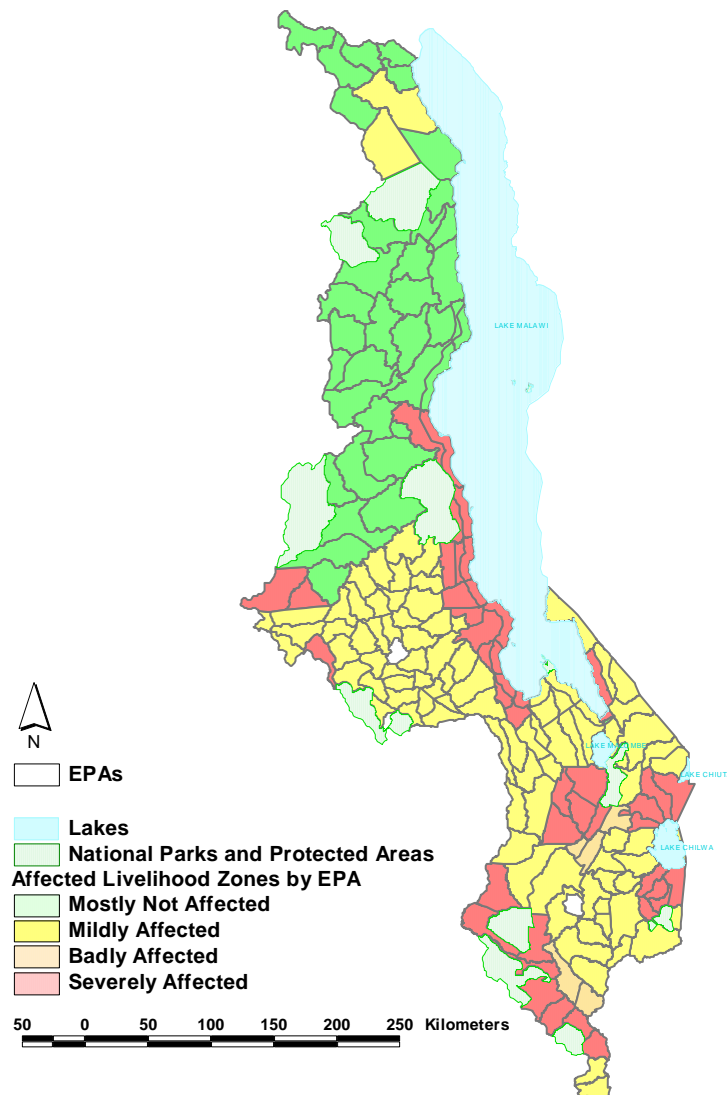
District	EPA	Livelihood Zone	Maize	Sweet Potato	Groundnuts	Cotton	Sorghum	Others
Balaka	Bazale, Mpilisi, Ulongwe and Phalula	Middle Shire Valley	30-50%	N/A	N/A	70-90%	50-70%	Millet 50-70% Ganyu-Ag. 100% Self Employ. 100%
Mwanza	Mwanza							
Chikwawa	Kalambo, Mbewe, Mikalango, Dolo	Lower Shire	10-30%	40-60%	15-30%	30-50%	45-65%	Millet 70-90%
Nsanje	Mpatsa, Mogoti							
Mangochi	Lungwena	Southern Lake Shore	35-55%	N/A	10-30%	N/A	45-65%	Rice 20-40%, Pulose 5-25% and
Salima	Khombedza, Chipoka, Tembwe							

	Chinguluwe							
Dedza	Mtakataka & Golomoti							
Mchinji	Kalulu, Mkanda, Msitu	Kasungu-Lilongwe Plain	50-70%	40-60%	25-45%	N/A		Tobacco 80-100% Pulses 85-100%
Nkhotakota	Linga, Zidyana, Mwansambo, Nkhunga	Rift Valley Escarpment	50-70%	80-100%	70-90%	90-110%	N/A	Rice 55-75% Pulses 60-80%
Salima	Khombedza							
Phalombe	Tamani, Mpinda, Naminjiwa, Kasongo, Ntubwi, Waruma	Lake Chilwa-Phalombe	55-75%	40-60%	30-50%	N/A	40-60%	Rice 80-100% cassava 35-55%
Machinga	Nampeya, Nanyumbu, Nsanama,							

Most crop prices are derived from actual inflation figures, of 138% of normal. The exceptions are cotton, which has doubled (200%) and tobacco, which has seen less of a rise, or 110%.

The map in **Figure 1** shows all the areas where maize has been significantly affected. These were the areas that were analysed by the MVAC to determine whether they are at risk of food insecurity during the months April to June 2005.

Figure 1: Affected Areas for Maize Production



Coping and responses

Table II – Some coping strategies used by households in each livelihood zone

Maize crop affectedness	Livelihood zone	Type of coping strategies
Badly affected	Kasungu Lilongwe Plain (some parts)	Cash from tobacco sales, draw down on maize, sweet potato and pulses stocks, switch expenditure
Badly affected	Middle Shire	Cash from self-employment (charcoal, fetching water, petty trading), <i>ganyu</i> (cotton picking) and kinship support, draw down on the few remaining food crops, switch expenditure
Badly affected	Northern Lake Shore	Fishing, draw down on maize and sweet potato stocks, switch expenditure
Badly affected	Rift Valley Escarpment	Draw down on Sweet potato and pulses stocks, ground nut sales, income from cotton, switch expenditure
Badly affected	Lower Shire	Draw down on millet, sweet potatoes, some cassava and sorghum (later on in June). Income from cotton or cotton-picking. Switch expenditure. Also, <i>ganyu</i> in Mozambique.

Table II – Some coping strategies used by households in each livelihood zone

Maize crop affectedness	Livelihood zone	Type of coping strategies
Badly affected	Shire Highlands	Draw down on maize stocks, switch expenditure.
Mildly affected	Border Productive Zone	Draw down on maize stocks, switch expenditure.
Mildly affected	Central Karonga	Draw down on rice, sweet potato stocks, switch expenditure.
Mildly affected	Chitipa Maize and Millet	Draw down on maize and millet stocks, switch expenditure.
Mildly affected	Western Rumphu and Mzimba	Cash from tobacco sales, draw down on maize and sweet potato stocks, ground nut sales, switch expenditure.
Mildly affected	Thyolo Mulanje Tea Estates	Draw down on bananas and sweet potatoes, ganyu for food and money, switch expenditure.

The livelihood zones in **Table II**, although affected in terms of crop production by the dry spells, still have some means of coping during these months (April to June 2005). Generally, the mildly affected areas can draw down on the food they have harvested, switch from selling to consuming crops, use income from cash crops to purchase food, switch expenditure from less-essential items to essential foods, sell livestock (usually only chickens), and (in a few places) consume wild foods. These coping strategies are, however, likely to exacerbate deficits later in the year. This is especially true of food stocks (that can be stored, such as grains) that may be depleted now, leaving little or nothing for later.

Deficits and Areas At Risk of Food Insecurity

Table III below lists the areas most at risk of food insecurity during the period April to June 2005. **Table IV** profiles the main characteristics of households expected to be at risk.

Table III – Areas At Risk, likely Deficits, Missing Food Entitlements and Cash equivalents to the Deficits

District	EPA	Approx. Population Affected	Food Energy Intake Deficits	Missing food entitlement, per Person (kg maize equiv.)	Approx. Cash equivalent of Deficit, per Household (MWK)	Livelihood zone
Nsanje	Mogoti, Mpatsa	21,300	5-15%	5 kg	1,680	Lower Shire
Chikwawa	Kalambo, Mitole, Mbewe, Dolo, Mikalango	132,800	5-15%	5 kg	1,680	Lower Shire
Balaka	All	152,500	5-15%	6 kg	1,570	Middle Shire
Zomba	Chingale (lowlands – Shire river)	22,200	5-15%	6 kg	1,570	Middle Shire
Machinga	Ntubwi (lowlands, near to Shire River)	11,500	5-15%	6 kg	1,570	Middle Shire
Mwanza	Mwanza	38,500	5-15%	6 kg	1,570	Middle Shire
Zomba	Chingale (highlands),	13,800	1-5%	2 kg	530	Shire Highlands
Machinga	Ntubwi (highlands)	7,200	1-5%	2 kg	530	Shire Highlands
Machinga	Nampeya, Nanyumbu, Nsanama, Ntubwi (Lake Chilwa side)	13,100	5-15%	6 kg	1,580	Lake Chilwa & Phalombe Plain

Table III – Areas At Risk, likely Deficits, Missing Food Entitlements and Cash equivalents to the Deficits

District	EPA	Approx. Population Affected	Food Energy Intake Deficits	Missing food entitlement, per Person (kg maize equiv.)	Approx. Cash equivalent of Deficit, per Household (MWK)	Livelihood zone
Phalombe	Tamani, Mpinda, Kasongo, Naminjiwa, Waruma	63,900	5-15%	6 kg	1,580	Lake Chilwa & Phalombe Plain
Mangochi	Lungwena (lakeshore)	16,000	0-5%	0.5 kg	150	Southern Lakeshore
Dedza	Golomoti, Mtakataka (lakeshore)	20,200	0-5%	0.5 kg	150	Southern Lakeshore
Salima	Tembwe, Khombedza, Chipoka (lake shore)	62,300	0-5%	0.5 kg	150	Southern Lakeshore
TOTAL		575,300				

It is important to note that these three months (April to June) are harvest months when staple prices are traditionally at their lowest during the year. Consideration must be given to the impact of interventions on these prices as for many households, the income earned from food sales will have a significant impact on food security for all later on in the year.

Poorer households' characteristics

The following table lists the main characteristics (mostly in terms of assets) that define the households at risk, based on MVAC Baselines. These characteristics should form the basis of targeting criteria for interventions, rather than

Table IV – Poor household characteristics

Area	Land holding (acres)	Land cultivated (acres)	Livestock	Normal Hh yearly cash income (MK)	Other
Lower Shire Chikwawa District, and Mapatsa, Magoti	3 – 4	1 – 1.5	Goats 0 – 4 Chickens 4 – 7	9,000 – 14,000	Lack farm inputs Normally finish their food from own harvest by July or August
Middle Shire Balaka District, Ntubwi, Mwanza	1 – 2	1 – 1.5	Goats 0 - 3 Chickens 1 - 5	12,000 – 17,000	Labour shortages Normally finish their food from own harvest between June and September
Lake Chiliwa and Palombe Plain Nampeya, Nanyumbu, Nsanama, Ntubwi, Tamani, Mpinda, Kasongo, Naminjiwa, Waruma EPAs		1 – 2.5	Goats 0 – 2 Chickens 4 – 6	8,000 – 12,000	Normally finish their food from own harvest by July

Table IV – Poor household characteristics

Area	Land holding (acres)	Land cultivated (acres)	Livestock	Normal Hh yearly cash income (MK)	Other
Densely Populated Shire Highlands Zomba District, Chingale EPA, Ntubwi EPA	0.3 – 0.75	0.5 – 0.75	Goats 0 – 5 Chickens 0 – 3	10,000 – 14,500	Normally finish their food from own harvest by June to August Do not use inputs Cultivate marginal land
Southern Lakeshore Khombedza, Tembwe, Chipoka, Mtakataka, Golomoti, Lungwena	0.5 – 2	0.5 – 1.5	Goats 0 – 2 Chickens 5 – 10	15,000 – 25,000	Normally finish their food from own harvest by July Lack inputs