

## 1. MALAWI

### Basic facts

- Is a small country in central Africa sharing borders with Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. Has a beautiful lake with fresh waters that stretches 360 miles from the north to the south.
- Malawi has a population of 13.2 million people.
- It is rated as the 13<sup>th</sup> poorest country in the world with a Gross Net Income per capita of USD 160.
- An estimated 65% of rural and 55% of urban population live in extreme poverty (below 1 USD per day)
- 85% of the population survive on subsistence farming.
- The infant, child and maternal mortality rates are amongst the 20 highest in the world.
- It is estimated that 49% of the children are moderately to severely stunted while 25% are underweight.
- HIV and AIDS is one of the leading causes of death among children and adults . Other diseases include malaria and diarrhea
- Currently 760,000 adults (15 – 49 years) are infected with HIV and suffer from AIDS.
- The AIDS pandemic has contributed to the proliferation of orphans currently estimated at 1,050,000 in Malawi,
- According to population estimates (2007) southern region of Malawi has the highest number of children, which are 3,452,607 out of which 654,425 are OVCs.

## **Map of Malawi showing districts and other features**



### **Local Food Economy**

- The staple food for Malawians is maize grown mostly on smallholder farms.
- Other crops include tubers, legumes, sorghum, sugarcane, bananas and peas which are grown as supplementary crops for sale to generate cash income and/or for 'luxury' consumption.
- Part of the food produced by the rural farmers is sold to the urban dwellers that form 15% of the population. With increasing population pressure the demand for more land for crop production is growing.
- The average household with 5 members has only 0.2 hectares of land that barely provides enough food to last for half year. Most rural people want to engage in alternative means to access food for their families. Some embark on off season crop production in wet lands where they grow maize and vegetables for food and for sale.
- Others embark on off- farm small scale businesses to generate cash income that enables them to purchase additional food for their families. Others go to cities looking for day jobs during some critical months of the year.

### **Problem Description**

- With a population of over 13 million people, about 85 percent live in rural areas where the source of household income is dependent on subsistence farming.
- Malawi's worsening poverty and health situation is linked to severe and chronic food shortages and the devastating impacts of HIV and AIDS.
- The Malawi Government in 2006 developed a food security policy framework whose overall goal is to significantly improve food security of the population through increasing agricultural productivity, crop diversity and sustainable agricultural growth and development.
- The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) is the major guiding framework for achieving food security.
- In the recent past food production has dwindled significantly largely due to ever increasing climate change, poor soils diminished by mono-cropping, increasing population pressure on resources and low community capacity to mobilize resources to purchase agricultural inputs.
- The Malawi government has since the year 2005/2006 agricultural season embarked on a fertiliser and seed subsidy program for small scale farmers using the coupon system. The approach has initially paid remarkable dividends to the extent that the year 2007 registered a surplus of 2.3 metric tonnes of maize yield above the national maize requirement of 2.2 metric tones (maize being the staple food for Malawians). Although this is a welcome development, some improvements to the system are yet to be made so that the programme benefits more deserving community members. The system was very well coordinated and implemented in the first two years but later got broken down in the third year when only a very few people benefited. Worse still, some failed to access fertilizers and seed in the right time making heir coupons useless. The government has acknowledged all this and has confirmed to the nation that the

- system will take a new shift in the 2008/09 agricultural season which starts in October.
- No matter how improved this system may become, it will still not reach out to everyone because of the limited government resources. Still more people will need support from NGOs and Faith Based Organizations in the same target villages.

### **HIV and AIDS**

- The HIV and AIDS pandemic has had negative impacts on peoples' livelihoods and food security situations in Malawi.
- It is estimated that 14% of the population is living with HIV & AIDS. The prevalence rates are higher in urban areas than in the rural (urban men 16% and rural men 9%).
- The pandemic has continuously eroded food security and people's livelihoods promotion initiatives especially in the rural areas. There has been an increased loss of human manpower that would engage in food production activities thereby reducing food production capacities at household level.
- Each time a member of the household has become sick, there has been an increased loss of production capital and labour in the home. Most households have spent all their savings on food and medication and have even sold precious assets to generate income.
- More time is spent nursing the sick or attending to funerals reducing productive time that would have been accorded to agricultural production.
- Since households cannot harvest enough food due to the effects of the HIV and Aids pandemic, there has been an added risk of malnutrition.
- Most of the affected households could only afford to grow just one type of crop per season and most of them lose livestock through emergency sales. These trends make the livelihoods of the poor people degenerate precipitously.

### **• *Livelihood sources***

#### Agricultural activities

- Agricultural production in Malawi is dependent on rainfall.
- The rainy season in Malawi is between the months of October through April the following year.
- Farmers would usually have their fields ready for planting by October. The staple food (maize) including other food crops (tubers and legumes) thrive during the same period although most of the tuber crops (cassava and sweet potatoes) would continue growing after the rainy season has expired. Farmers would tend to harvest and store their maize in the months of May and June. The cassava would

be uprooted and processed for storage in August and September. Cassava makes a good supplement to maize in times of food shortage.

Most households only have 0.2 hectares or less of land available to them for farming. These do not produce enough to adequately feed an average family of 5 people. Most of the households therefore run out of their harvested food for various periods of the year. The most vulnerable households have to struggle to make ends meet while those who have more resources find alternative activities to supplement food supply. At least 60% of the households would not have food for 4 months of the year. They would employ various coping strategies such as doing piece work to earn money to buy food or engage in unpopular types of businesses such as charcoal burning and selling. This leads to environmental degradation.

(Insert Picture of people with charcoal)

## **2. PRESSING PROBLEMS FOR THE PEOPLE**

- Food shortages some times due to shortage of rains and agricultural inputs
- Health problems such as –HIV and AIDS, malaria are common in the rural areas
- Limited education opportunities ( due to shortage of colleges, lack of fees for poor families)

## **3. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN SUPPORTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

- Support to agricultural extension work and input subsidy program
- Provision of free education for grades 1-8 ( fees required in high school and colleges)
- Provision of health care for urban and rural communities

## **4. THE WORK OF FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS**

- These complement government efforts in various fields including health, agriculture, education and provision of clean water

## **5. THE WORK OF BT SYNOD THROUGH BSDC IN SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**

### **a) Livelihoods promotion and protection**

- Supports agricultural initiatives for the rural poor to generate food, income and self employment
- Provides improved crop seeds to poor households
- Promotes livestock development- goats and chickens to promote nutrition
- Train farmers on basic farming technologies
- Supports irrigation work during the dry seasons of the year

(insert pictures of irrigation work –Chaswanthaka irrigation site or any livestock activity)

**Other initiatives include**

- Provision of safe drinking water ( water in some cases becomes scarce, pple travel long distances and queue for it . They carry it on bicycles and over their heads

( insert pix – protected and unprotected water sources)

### **Challenges in implementing livelihood programmes**

- Peoples’ needs keep changing with time
- Occurrence of disasters (droughts and floods)
- Requires adequate capital investment to be able to reach out to many people in our 18 Presbyteries

### **b) Support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children**

- Provision of early childhood development education for children under school going age of 6
- BSDC run 7 centers with 100 children each (60% orphans and 40% others)- children are oriented to basic childhood development education through play, drawings and singing. Are provided with nutritious meals and leave for home by mid day.
- Other support include education for students in secondary schools and colleges
- Support to HBC work for the people living in the catchment areas where the vulnerable children live

### **Success stories of the OVC work**

( insert stories and pix of blind boy at Nguludi School for the Blind, Daniel Mwale of the Catholic University and Khobidi of the College of Medicine- University of Malawi)

### **Challenges in supporting OVCs**

- Expensive initiative yet very helpful
- Has limited sponsors
- The number of children requiring support is high

## **NEW PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENTS**

### **NEW PROGRAMMES UNDER DEVELOPMENT TO GENERATE INCOMES THAT WOULD SUSTAIN OPERATIONS OF BSDC**

1. Growing of agricultural crops and supporting a dairy unit at Naming’azi Farm training Centre. There will be 3 ha of land planted with maize and 2 ha soya beans and 1 ha with ground nuts. This will promote food availability for OVC in the Blantyre Day Care Centres. Surplus will be sold to generate cash income

2. Developing a livestock village in Balaka Rural district;

- Livestock breeding village for goats , cattle and pigs
- will be sold out to interested parties to generate income
- some will be issued out to legible out of school OVCs to set up small farms for themselves

3. Support to OVC fund

DISPLAY OF PICTURES / NAMES OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND THEIR  
AMBITIONS IN LIFE

**Slots of bigger holes to have:**

Card for Naming'azi Farm Training Centre

Balaka Livestock breeding Village

Clean water support

OVC work – pick e-mail address for further communications on area of interest you would like to support

Name of Presbytery you would want to partner with

Selling the large cards for minimum \$30

For further communications: [WMwalabu@bdsc1.com](mailto:WMwalabu@bdsc1.com)- to indicate your choice of area of support

**Name of Project:**

**1. Naming'azi Farm Training Centre- Domasi Presbytery**

**Project description:** Is a training centre for church members and surrounding community, has demonstrations of ;

- fish ponds
- dairy cows
- rabbits
- goats
- agricultural fields
- offers accommodation & restaurant facilities for guests

Budget required per year: MK 12,000,000 (USD 85,714)

**2. Balaka Livestock breeding Village**

- Is a new asset building and income generating initiative
- breeding cows, goats and pigs for orphans and vulnerable children to establish own farms
- will sale excess animals to generate income
- will provide animal care services for surrounding communities

Estimated budget: MK 2,500,000 (USD17, 857)

### **3. Clean water support**

- Water is life for community members and children
- Improves hygiene
- Reduces workload on women and children

Estimated budget for drilling one borehole: MK1,000,000 (USD 7,143)

**List of Presbyteries that are in Blantyre Synod: Please chose your partner !**

- 1. Blantyre North**
- 2. Blantyre City**
- 3. Chiuta**
- 4. Chingale**
- 5. Domasi**
- 6. Liviridzi**
- 7. Mulanje**
- 8. Migowi**
- 9. Mwanza**
- 10. Ntcheu**
- 11. Thyolo**
- 12. Zomba**

**You may get additional list (6) from the Synod to make 18**