

# Nutrition-sensitive social protection and integrated programs in Malawi:

*Evidence from a longitudinal study in Zomba spanning the 2016-17 food crises*

Workshop & policy dialogue | May 17, 2018 | Sunbird Capital Hotel | Lilongwe, Malawi



MALAWI



Save the Children

- 08.00 – 08.30 **REGISTRATION**
- 08.30 – 08.40 **Opening remarks**  
*Dr. Bob Baulch, International Food Policy Research Institute (Lilongwe)*
- 08.40 – 08.50 **Official opening**  
*Mr. Blessings Muwalo, Deputy Director, Dept. of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, MoHP*
- 08.50 – 9.00 **Nutrition-sensitive interventions: what we know and what more we still need to find out**  
*Dr. Aulo Gelli, International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington DC)*
- 9.00 – 10.30 **SESSION 1: BUILDING THE EVIDENCE FOR AGRICULTURE-NUTRITION BEHAVIOR CHANGE**  
Results from the Nutrition Embedded Evaluation Program – Impact Evaluation randomized trial
- 9.00 – 9:20 **Impact results (year 1)**  
*Dr. Mangani Katundu, Associate Professor, Chancellor College*
- 9.20 – 9.40 **Costs and sustainability results (year 2)**  
*Dr. Aulo Gelli, International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington DC)*
- 9.40 – 10.00 **Financing and implementation of an integrated intervention**  
*Mr. George Chidalengwa, Save the Children*
- 10.00 – 10.20 **District-level perspectives on implementation**  
*Mr. Mathews Mambo, Nutrition Officer, MoAIWD*
- 10.20 – 10.30 **Question & answer session**
- 10.30 – 11.00 **COFFEE AND TEA BREAK**
- 11.00– 11.30 **SESSION 2: SOCIAL PROTECTION RESPONSE TO FOOD INSECURITY CRISES IN MALAWI**
- The impact of emergency food transfers on food security**  
*Dr. Aulo Gelli, International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington DC)*
- 11.30 – 13.15 **SESSION 3: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SCALING-UP NATIONAL PROGRAMS?**  
**Panel: Programmatic suggestions and implications for the Agriculture-Sector Food Security and Nutrition Strategy**  
*Facilitator: Stacia Nordin, Nutrition Education Specialist, Strengthening Agricultural & Nutrition Extension  
Virginia Kachigunda, Deputy Director, Dept. of School Health, Nutrition, HIV and AIDS  
McKnight Kalanda, Director of Child Affairs, Dept. of Child Development  
Caoimhe de Barra, Country Director, Concern Worldwide  
Alexander Kalimbira, Associate Professor, Dept. of Human Nutrition & Health, LUANAR  
Maureen Maguza-Tembo, Deputy Director of Nutrition, Dept. of Agricultural Extension*
- 13.15 – 13.30 **Closing remarks**  
*Mr. Stanley Phiri, Deputy Country Director, Save the Children Malawi*
- 13.30 – 14.30 **LUNCH**

## **Nutrition-sensitive social protection and integrated programs in Malawi**

*A workshop and policy dialogue: New evidence, challenges and opportunities*

Nutrition-sensitive social protection and integrated agriculture-nutrition programs have the potential to improve nutrition. However, this potential is yet to be fully realized. The evidence indicates that limitations in the design and implementation of nutrition-sensitive interventions, as well as the lack of rigor in impact evaluations, prevent clear conclusions regarding their contribution to improved nutrition. Recent evidence from rigorous evaluations suggests that well-designed and carefully implemented nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs improve maternal and child nutrition. Furthermore, these programs are particularly effective at increasing intake of nutritious foods and improving diet quality when they include strong behavior change communication (BCC) and women's empowerment interventions.

In early 2016, Malawi suffered its second consecutive year of harvest failure: with maize production estimated to be 2.4 million metric tons (MT) compared to 3.2 million MT in a normal year. The President of Malawi declared an emergency in April 2016 and appealed for assistance totaling US\$ 395 million from the international community and private sector. The resulting humanitarian response, known in Malawi as the Food Insecurity Response Program (FIRP), was of unprecedented scale, with almost 40 percent of the population receiving either in-kind food or cash transfers or some combination of the two, delivered through various modalities (cereals and oil in-kind, maize vouchers, cash, and mobile money). In addition, a range of other life-saving programs were implemented at scale, including screening and treatment of children and vulnerable groups suffering from acute and moderate malnutrition, emergency school feeding programs, agriculture, health, water and sanitation programs, and complementary productive asset creation. The final cost of the FIRP is estimated to have been US\$ 287 million, of which 23 percent was financed by the Government of Malawi and the remainder by its international development partners. The extensive and timely nature of the humanitarian response minimized hunger-related mortality and suffering throughout most of country. In addition, maize prices did not increase rapidly towards the end of the agricultural season, as they had in previous Malawian food crisis, and distress sales of productive assets were reduced.

The Nutrition Embedded Evaluation Program Impact Evaluation (NEEP-IE) cluster randomized control trial assessed the effectiveness of implementing an agriculture and nutrition intervention through community-based childcare centers in Malawi. The NEEP-IE study also provided the opportunity to undertake a longitudinal quasi-experimental impact evaluation of the seasonal food assistance provided to food insecure households in Zomba.

This workshop will present new evidence on what has worked in terms of nutrition-sensitive approaches to improving food security and nutrition in Malawi. In addition, it will engage stakeholders to deliberate on how to apply the learning to ongoing government policies and programs.

Specifically, the objectives of this event are:

- Review and validate new evidence on nutrition-sensitive agriculture, nutrition, and social protection programs in Malawi
- Highlight evidence-based suggestions for stronger multi-sectoral action towards improved food security and nutrition
- Discuss implications for strengthening multi-sectoral policy engagement and uptake of research findings

Potential approaches for meeting agriculture sector goals while simultaneously improving the diets of Malawians will be explored. We hope to attract stakeholders from government, academia, civil society, and implementation and development partners to engage in the discussion.