

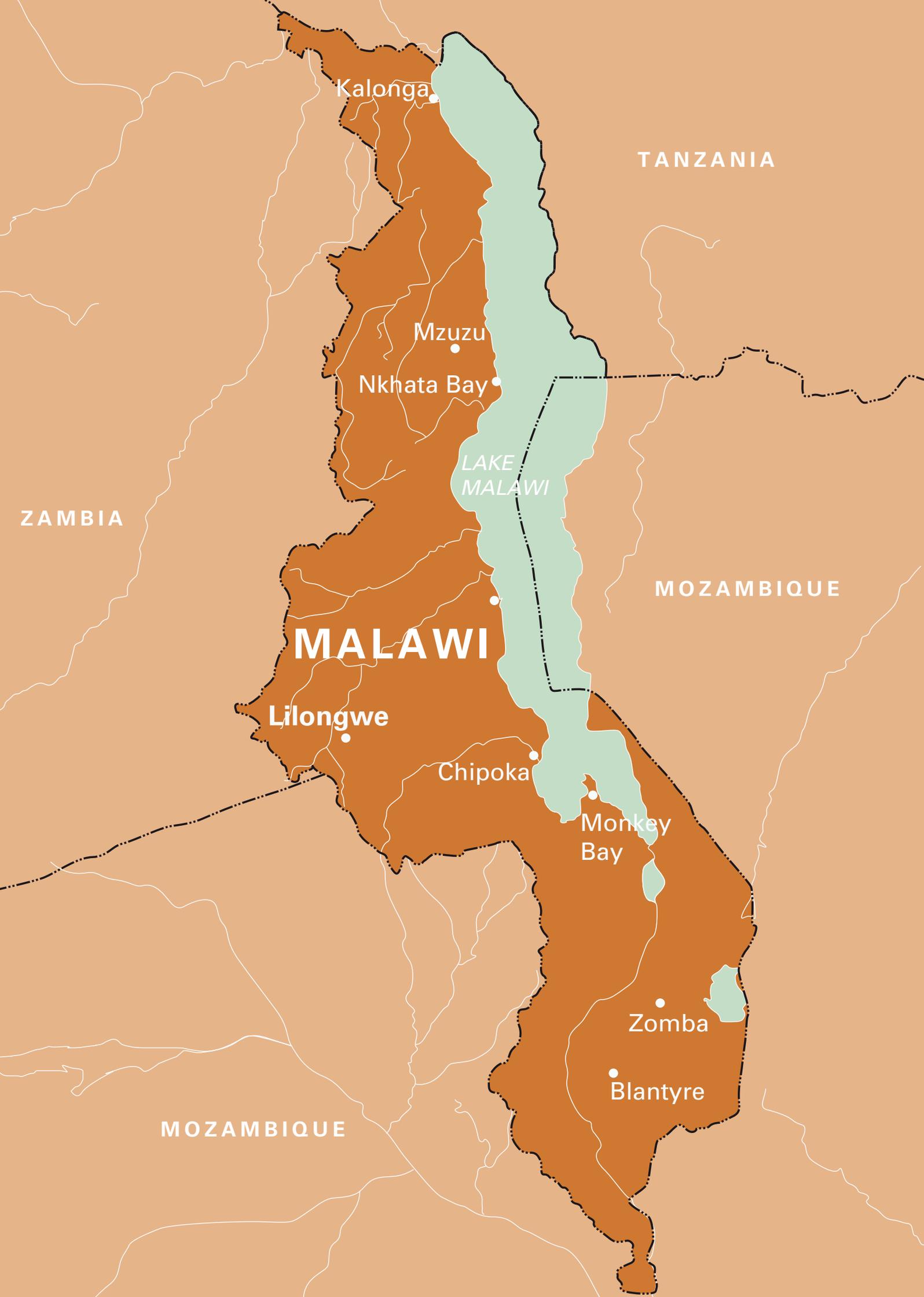


Country Strategy Paper 2010-2014
Summary

Malawi



Ireland's
commitment
to a world
without poverty
and hunger



Kalonga

TANZANIA

Mzuzu

Nkhata Bay

LAKE
MALAWI

ZAMBIA

MOZAMBIQUE

MALAWI

Lilongwe

Chipoka

Monkey
Bay

Zomba

Blantyre

MOZAMBIQUE

Contents

	Page
Foreword	4
1. About Irish Aid	5
2. Malawi in Context: fighting to keep hunger at bay	6
3. The Country Strategy 2010-2014: Linking Food, Nutrition & Good Governance	7
4. Programme Components	8
4.1 Outcome 1: Increasing Crop Productivity and Diversification	8
4.2 Outcome 2: Improving Nutrition and Household Resilience	8
4.3 Outcome 3: Strengthening Governance	9
5. Ireland's contribution to development in Malawi	10
4. Budget 2010-2014	11

Foreword

The recent history of Malawi cannot be told without reference to famine, hunger and malnutrition. Its people have endured more than their fair share of these tragedies, tragedies which resonate strongly with the Irish people. Malawi is striving to achieve better food security, so that in future Malawians will not suffer from want of food. Irish Aid is committed to assisting that effort. To that end, the overarching goal of Irish Aid's first multi-annual Country Strategy Paper for Malawi, is to deliver on Millennium Development Goal 1, on the eradication of hunger and reduction in poverty, by ensuring households are better nourished, food secure and less vulnerable to poverty.

Irish Aid has been providing assistance to Malawi since 2002. This relationship intensified with the establishment of an Embassy in Lilongwe in 2007. The development and implementation of this first Irish Aid Country Strategy Paper for Malawi represents a new important step for deepening the commitment of the Irish Government to development work in Malawi. The CSP, which has been developed in partnership with the Government of Malawi, fully embraces the recommendations from the Irish Government's Hunger Task Force and reflects Irish Aid's development priorities in Malawi for the next five years. It is sharply focused on supporting efforts to reduce poverty, with a specific emphasis on strengthening national food and nutrition security and improving governance. The Strategy provides the mechanisms for us to achieve the maximum possible effectiveness of our support to the people of Malawi through strengthening monitoring systems, having a clear focus on results, and through appropriate coordination with Government and other development partners.

Malawi faces huge challenges. More than one in four Malawians are undernourished. One in eight lives with HIV & AIDS. One in ten newborn babies will not live to their fifth birthday. Irish Aid is committed to ensuring that Malawi doesn't face these challenges alone. We will work to shorten the road to a better, brighter future for all Malawians.

Liam MacGabhann
Ambassador

1. About Irish Aid

“Poverty reduction, to reduce vulnerability and increase opportunity, is the overarching objective of Irish Aid ... Ireland will support the promotion of human development, human security and justice, the building and strengthening of democracy, the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights”.

(White Paper on Irish Aid 2006)

Irish Aid is the Government of Ireland’s programme of assistance to developing countries. Ireland has had an official development assistance (ODA) programme since 1974. It has grown steadily over the years, with total ODA in the region of €669 million planned in 2011. Ireland’s development cooperation policy is central to Ireland’s foreign policy and reflects our longstanding commitment to human rights and fairness in international relations which are inseparable from Irish foreign policy.

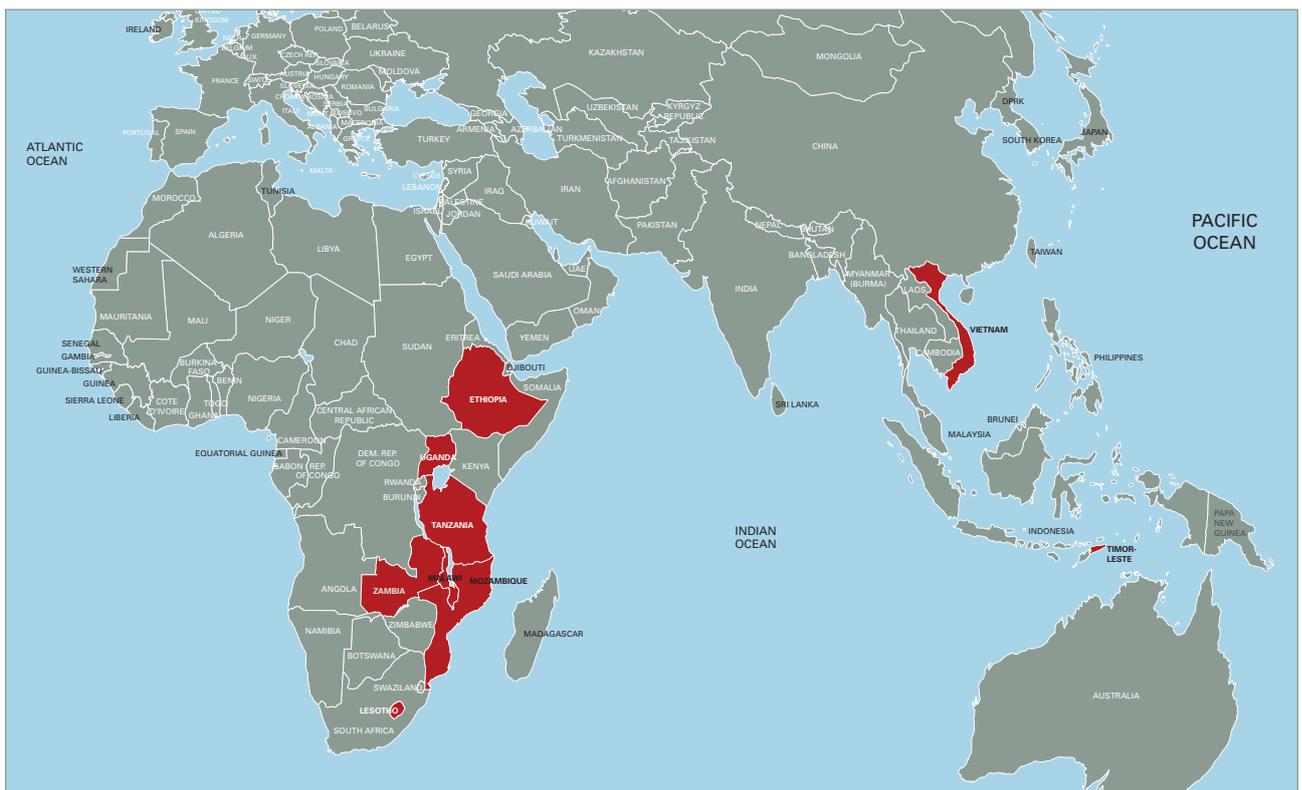
The Irish Aid programme has as its core priority the reduction of poverty, hunger and inequality in developing countries. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are the set of targets established by the world’s leaders

at the UN in 2000, focusing on the main causes and manifestations of extreme poverty in today’s world. The MDGs underpin the work of Ireland’s aid programme. Irish Aid works in cooperation with a wide range of partners including Government and non-Governmental organisations, missionaries, UN agencies, international organisations and humanitarian agencies.

Africa is the main geographic focus of Ireland’s programme. Of the world’s 49 least developed countries, 33 are in Africa. Over 80% of Ireland’s overseas development aid goes to Africa. The primary focus of the programme is on nine countries; seven in Africa (Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) and two in Asia (Timor-Leste and Vietnam).

This document describes Irish Aid’s strategy for Malawi. It sets out a realistic, strategic, programme of work for five years from 2010 to 2014, that will allow Irish Aid to build on the achievements and progress it has made to date and respond to the changing development environment in Malawi.

Irish’s Partner Countries



2. Malawi in Context: fighting to keep hunger at bay

	Malawi	Ireland
Population (million)	13.1	4.6
Human Development Index (HDI)	153 rd	5 th
GDP per capita (US\$)	380	38,768
HIV/AIDS Prevalence (%)	12.6	0.2
Under 5 Mortality (per 1,000)	122	4
Maternal Mortality (per 100,000)	807	1
Female Literacy (%)	60	99
Pupil Teacher Ratio (Primary)	1:82	1:16

Source: 2010 UN Country Assessment Report, Malawi

Malawi is a young democracy. Following independence from Britain in 1964, Kamuzu Banda ruled for 30 years under a one-party system of government, until the country held its first multi-party elections in 1994. In 2004, the people of Malawi elected Bingu wa Mutharika as President, and he was re-elected in 2009. President Mutharika and his government have helped to foster greater development and economic growth. However, the Malawian economy remains vulnerable to global economic conditions and good annual rainfall. The 2008 increase in fertiliser and fuel prices destabilised Malawi's economy driving up the government deficit, spurring inflation, and reducing Malawi's currency reserves thereby reducing Malawi's capacity to import necessities including fuel, fertiliser and pharmaceuticals.

Though an impoverished nation, Malawi is making significant development progress towards achieving the MDGs, the aims of which the Malawian Government has ensured correlate closely with their own national development strategy. In order to execute this strategy, however, Malawi is hugely dependent on outside assistance in the form of aid which makes up more than 40% of government income.

Irish Aid plays its part in providing assistance with a particular focus on MDG 1, which aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and on the priorities of the Irish Government's Hunger Task Force, in improving Malawian agriculture and nutrition.

The prospects for continued progress in Malawi depend on the success of its agriculture sector, which accounts for around 90% of exports. Agricultural productivity is weather dependent and mostly relies on a single cropping season each year. Maize, the staple food, is grown by 97% of households. Only 1 in 5 farmers produce enough food to sell at the market. Many households, particularly women-

headed households, run out of food between November and March which is called the 'hungry season'.

Malawi experienced recurrent food shortages when harvests failed, such as in 2002 and 2005. With 85% of the population dependent on subsistence farming and with a susceptibility to both droughts and flooding, Malawi faces a continuing struggle to ensure that its people have enough food to survive. The extent of the problem of hunger in Malawi is reflected in its nutrition indicators; more than 1 in 5 children under five years of age is under-weight, 1 in 20 suffers from acute severe malnutrition and stunted growth is widespread, particularly in rural areas.

In 2005, the government moved to improve food security by introducing the Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme, subsidising seed and fertiliser costs to make them available to vulnerable smallholder farmers. This has led to improved food availability through significantly higher maize production.

Malawi's problems are more than just ensuring an adequate food supply; the impact of the HIV & AIDS pandemic has been severe on Malawi, decimating a generation and leaving thousands of orphaned children in its wake. In more recent times however, the prevalence rate has come down to under 12%. Problems also exist with an inadequate energy and transportation infrastructure which greatly inhibit economic opportunity.

In order to address these challenges and ensure the basic needs of each person are met, Malawi will need to maintain political stability, strong economic growth, strive for an improved and more productive agriculture sector and foster more efficient and effective governance. Irish Aid is working with the Government of Malawi, as well as other development partners, to assist it in facing these challenges. We are seeing positive results from this partnership and are committed to supporting country-led efforts to reduce poverty and stimulate growth in this land-locked country for many years to come.

3. The Country Strategy 2010-2014

Linking Food, Nutrition & Good Governance

Ireland's support to Malawi started during the food security crisis in 2002. The Irish Government approved the opening a new Irish Embassy and the commencement of the bilateral aid programme in November 2007.

Ireland's strategy for development assistance to Malawi is set out in the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for the period 2010-2014. The CSP is specifically targeted at achieving MDG 1 which aims to eradicate hunger and reduce poverty. The CSP strongly reflects the policy priorities of the Government of Malawi as outlined in the Malawi Government's Growth and Development Strategy and the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force Report of the Irish Government.

The goal of the strategy is:

- > To ensure households are better nourished, food secure and less vulnerable to poverty

Three outcomes are envisaged at the end of the CSP:

- > **Outcome 1:** Increased food productivity and crop diversification adapted to climate change
- > **Outcome 2:** Improved nutrition and social supports to enhance the resilience of households
- > **Outcome 3:** Improved governance and service delivery with a focus on household food security and resilience



Small holder farmer selling potatoes at a roadside market. Photo: Laura Lalor

4. Programme Components

4.1 Outcome 1: Increasing Food Productivity and Crop Diversification

Irish Aid recognises that food production, crop diversification and soil fertility management are fundamental to improving food availability, increasing food security and reducing poverty in Malawi. Irish Aid supports the Government's Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme targeted at increasing agricultural productivity among 1.6 million poor smallholder farmers to strengthen national and household food security. This programme is complemented by Irish Aid support to Concern Universal for the implementation of a sustainable livelihoods programme in three rural districts, targeting 50,000 people living in rural Malawi.

Irish Aid supports the International Potato Centre to conduct research on high quality potato seeds and to roll out improved varieties of planting seed for 'Irish' potatoes and sweet potatoes. This will increase the availability of a variety of foods that contribute to improving diets and boosting smallholder income. The support will also improved household access to Vitamin A fortified sweet potatoes.

Irish Aid also supports the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) which focuses on partnerships between farmers, seed traders and government to improve the availability of, and access to, improved varieties of legume seeds. Cooperation with the World Agro-Forestry Centre (ICRAF) is aimed at increasing food security, income and livelihood opportunities for rural communities through the use of technologies that enhance soil fertility and promote sustainable land management practices. Irish Aid supports the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM) in rolling out a national programme to promote the principles and practice of conservation farming among smallholder farmers.



Irish Aid supported agroforestry seeds. Photo: Laura Lalor

Ireland's Hunger Task Force

The launch of report of Ireland's Hunger Task Force in September 2008 set in motion several significant developments in Ireland's approach to the global food security crisis. The Irish Government subsequently announced that the eradication of hunger would become a cornerstone of Ireland's foreign policy. This was followed by a pledge to spend at least 20% of its ODA on hunger responses by 2012. The Malawi Country Strategy Plan (2010-2014) strongly reflects this commitment, the focus of which is fully consistent with the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force Report.

4.2 Outcome 2: Improving Nutrition and Household Resilience

Irish Aid is committed to preventing and responding to malnutrition and to the provision of social supports to the most vulnerable households. Our approach incorporates a strong focus on long-term preventive measures such as vitamin fortification, nutrition education and implementing measures to counter natural disasters. This includes actions to strengthen the capacity of local state institutions.

In recognition of the negative effects of malnutrition on physical, social and economic development in Malawi, Irish Aid is supporting the implementation of national programmes of Community Therapeutic Care and Vitamin A fortification. Support is provided also for the dissemination of essential nutrition messages through the Nutrition Communication and Education Strategy.

Reducing the vulnerability of Malawi's poorest households to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation in disaster-prone districts is also an area of priority. Irish Aid is working to strengthen cooperation between government and development partners in the area of social protection and provides financial assistance for a social cash-transfer programme aimed at assisting the ultra-poor in selected districts.

Irish Aid is working with the Norwegian Embassy, DFID and the Government to provide financial assistance for the implementation of a Disaster Risk Reduction Programme. This will assist in protecting poorer households from the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

A Vulnerability Approach

In Malawi, people's lives are rendered fragile by an inter-play of several factors. These include a high prevalence of HIV & AIDS, dependence on rain-fed agriculture, small land holdings, the unequal status of women, high rates of population growth and poor access to essential services. The Malawi CSP uses this understanding of vulnerability as its starting point. The planned programme interventions are designed to have a strong focus on factors that contribute to household poverty and susceptibility to external shocks (such as disease, crop failure, erratic weather etc.). This will necessarily involve working at both national and district levels with government and civil society partners and working in both areas of prevention and response.

4.3 Outcome 3: Strengthening Governance

Good governance and support for democracy are critical elements for national development and poverty reduction in Malawi. Irish Aid will promote the strengthening of systems for improved governance and service delivery with a particular focus on food security and household resilience. This will be directed through support to both national level and district level governance structures and civil society partners.

Following the conduct of peaceful, well-organised presidential and parliamentary elections in 2009, Irish Aid, together with other development partners will assist the Malawi Electoral Commission with the local government elections planned for 2011. Support for these elections will be complemented by activities to strengthen the district assemblies and services through financing the Local Development Fund and the Local Government Service Charter.

The fight against corruption is of central importance also – and needs to be maintained with strong local leadership. Support will be directed to the Anti-Corruption Bureau to advance the implementation of the government's Anti Corruption Strategy. A number of Malawian civil society organisations will be supported also for advocating for, and supporting the strengthening of essential services at district level.

Irish Aid's Partners

Irish Aid in Malawi is committed to working with a variety of partner organisations to deliver on the objectives of the Country Strategy Plan (CSP). These include government, NGO's, UN agencies, and international research institutions.

On the government side, Irish Aid supports the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in providing financing for the seeds component of the Farm Input Subsidy Programme. Support is provided to the Ministry of Development Planning Cooperation and the Ministry of Women and Child Development for the finalisation of the social support policy and the pilot cash transfer programme. Other government ministries supported include the Ministry of Local and Rural Development (Joint Capacity Development Programme for Local Governance), the Office of the President and Cabinet (National Nutrition Policy and Strategy and the Public Service Charter Programme) and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming). In addition, financial assistance is directed in support of the work of the Malawi Electoral Commission and the Anti Corruption Bureau.

As well as providing support directly for programmes managed by the Government of Malawi, Irish Aid supports three International Agriculture Research Centres that use enhanced technologies to improve the production and availability of food to smallholder farmers. These include the International Potato Centre (CIP), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), and World Agro-forestry Centre (ICRAF). These organisations work in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

Some support is directed through the United Nations system in Malawi. In addition to supporting the One UN Reform process, the Embassy works closely with several United Nations organisations including UNDP, UNICEF and WFP.

In addition Irish Aid provides financial assistance to Malawian, International and Irish-based NGOs working in Malawi for areas that are related to the thematic focus of the CSP (examples include the Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN), the Catholic Commission on Justice and Peace, the Concern Universal, Concern Worldwide, Goal, and Trocaire).

In March 2010, the Irish and U.S Ambassadors in Malawi signed a three-year cooperation framework agreement to help Malawi in its fight against hunger and food insecurity.

5. Ireland's contribution to development in Malawi

With Irish Aid support the following development results have been achieved

Agriculture and food security

There have been dramatic improvements in food security in Malawi since the food crisis in 2002.

In 2006, 38% of households had less than sufficient food to eat. In 2009, this had reduced to only 10% of the population suffering from food shortages.

National crop estimates for 2010 indicate a national maize surplus of 1.1 metric tons largely attributed to the Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme.

In 2009 and 2010, Ireland contributed €4.5 million in support of the government Farm Input Subsidy Programme that targeted 1.6 million smallholder farmers with subsidised vouchers to purchase fertiliser and improved maize and legume seeds.

Irish Aid also supports the International Potato Centre to introduce improved varieties of 'Irish Potato' to smallholder farmers with the objective of improving their access to food throughout the year and boosting their household income. The programme currently targets over 7,000 smallholder farmers whose incomes have increased by 100% and considerably more in some cases.

Nutrition

The stunting prevalence has dropped from 46% to 36% between 2006 and 2009, reflecting improvements in the availability of food and changes in dietary practice (Malawi National Micronutrient Survey, 2009).

Ireland supports UNICEF and the Office of the President and Cabinet in the implementation of national programmes in community therapeutic care, nutrition education, and micronutrient fortification. With Irish Aid support, a national Vitamin A fortification programme commenced in 2010. This will target 50% of the population of Malawi to increase their Vitamin A intake on a daily basis and is likely to have enormous positive impacts on decreasing infection rates among younger children.

Governance

Ireland provided financial support to the Government of Malawi for the 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections. Irish Aid support was directed both to the Malawi Electoral Commission and to Malawian civil society organisations for voter education programmes.

The outcome was a fairly contested election, the result of which was validated by local and external election monitors. In a country where multi-party elections have only existed since 1994, this is of enormous significance in supporting the establishment of democracy and in particular, facilitating Malawian citizens have a say in the future governance of their country.



Small holder farmer Sharon Bomba exchanges her farm input voucher for supplies at Peter Cornordi's store. Photo: James Anubi

6. Budget 2010-2014

Management Arrangements

The Irish Aid programme in Malawi is managed and overseen by the Head of Development who reports to the Ambassador, or Head of Mission. He is assisted by the Deputy Head of Development, Third Secretary and a team of locally-recruited programme and support staff. The budget below is indicative and is intended for planning purposes over the five years of the CSP.

Budget (figures in €millions)

Objective	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Increasing crop productivity and diversification	7.550	5.225	5.225	6.320	8.000	10.000	34.770
Improving nutrition and household resilience	1.190	2.375	2.375	2.850	3.760	4.700	16.060
Improving Governance	1.420	1.900	1.900	2.230	2.590	3.600	12.220
Total	10.160	10.000	10.000	12.000	15.000	19.000	66.000

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