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**MALAWI**

# PROTECTING ECOSYSTEMS AND RESTORING FORESTS IN MALAWI (PERFORM)

## GENDER ANALYSIS AND PLAN





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Photo: A young mother sells mushrooms that she collected from Perekezi Forest Reserve, 2015. Courtesy of Deborah Espinosa.

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MAY 2015

## **DISCLAIMER**

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Area Development Committee
BCC	Behavior Change Communications
BMC	Block Management Committee
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
DC	
DFO	
EPA	Extension Planning Area
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GOM	Government of Malawi
IEC	Information and education campaign
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEDs	Low-emission Development Strategy
LFMB	Local Forest Management Board
LFO	Local Forestry Organization
LUANAR	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NRM	
PERFORM	Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
SOW	Statement of Work
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

USG	United States Government
VDC	Village Development Committee
VNRMC	Village Natural Resources Management Committee
VSL	Village Savings and Loans

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Both the Government of Malawi (GOM) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) seek to achieve gender equality, including in the land and forest sector, so that all Malawians – men, women, boys, and girls – may participate in and benefit from the development of their country.

Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) is a partnership between the GOM and USAID. The premise of PERFORM is that if Malawi's people and government are empowered to make informed management decisions about the forest and soil resources on which they depend, then the quality of life for Malawians will be improved.

Malawians derive many benefits from the Miombo woodlands, including food, water, and fuel. These woodlands, however, are decreasing at one of the highest rates in southern Africa due to unsustainable use of fuel wood and charcoal, poor agricultural practices, limited economic choices, and high population growth. PERFORM seeks to help address these issues by focusing on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) readiness; low-emissions land-use opportunities and planning capacities, sustainability and capacity building; and integration within Malawi's development priorities. Because greenhouse gas emissions are overwhelmingly from the land sector, which is dominated by smallholder farmers, Objective 2 of PERFORM introduces low-emissions alternatives to smallholders.

Given that access, control, perception, and use of forest and land resources have significant gender dimensions, gender integration is a critical part of PERFORM's work. This *Gender Analysis and Plan* is a key deliverable under PERFORM's First Annual Work Plan, primarily focused on Objective 2. The objectives of this *Gender Analysis and Plan* are to: (1) assess gender aspects relevant to the PERFORM Project; (2) develop a comprehensive plan for addressing gender issues through project implementation, based on the assessment; and (3) help integrate the PERFORM Gender Plan in the project's first-year work plan and life of project performance monitoring and evaluation plan (PMEP). A review of secondary literature informed this analysis, followed by a field assessment in two of the three priority areas, i.e. communities surrounding the Ntchisi Forest Reserve and Perekezi Forest Reserve in Ntchisi and Mzimba Districts, respectively.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### LEGAL RIGHTS AND STATUS

- Malawi's constitutional and statutory law guarantees equality of the sexes, explicitly according men and women the same rights, including equal protection, legal capacity, and the right to acquire and own property, jointly and with others. Discrimination based on sex is prohibited.
- The Marriage Act codifies the legal age of marriage to 18 years, although it maintains the constitutional exception that marriage is allowed between the ages of 15 and 18, with consent of the parent or guardian (§ 14).
- The Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act of 2011 protects the inheritance of spouses and children and makes property grabbing a criminal offense.

### TIME AND SPACE



- Malawian women are considered “time poor” relative to their male counterparts, carrying a “double burden” of domestic and productive work. Compared to men, time constraints impede women’s ability to participate in income-generating activities, education, and community governance, all of which can enhance economic returns and wellbeing.
- Any new activities, such as attending trainings or meetings, will add to women’s time burden.

## **ACCESS TO (AND CONTROL OF) RESOURCES**

- Nationally, there are significant gender disparities in educational opportunities and competencies. The proportion of adults who never attended school is higher among women, estimated at 28%, compared to 14% of men. Of the 74% of the population aged 15 years and above that have not attained any educational qualification, 80% are women. Literacy rates are highest in the north with the gap widening dramatically heading to the south.
- Significant regional differences exist between patrilineal and matrilineal systems regarding the customary ownership and inheritance of land, making it difficult to generalize. The northern region, including Mzimba District, is predominately patrilineal, with land owned by males and passing from father to son. In contrast, the central (Ntchisi) and southern (Machinga) regions are predominately matrilineal, with land ownership by women and inheritance passing from mother to daughter.
- Under both patrilineal and matrilineal systems, men primarily make decisions regarding customary land. Particularly within matrilineal communities, however, the system is complicated by the location where a newly married couple takes up residence. In the study area, there appears to be a wide spectrum of practice, including joint decision making occurring between husbands and wives.
- Forestry resources supply about 90% of Malawi’s energy sources and contribute over 30% to rural incomes. Men and women in the study areas collect forestry resources for home consumption and sale, with few differences between the sexes, including:
  - Firewood for home energy and for sale (men and women)
  - Mushrooms for home consumption and sale (men and women)
  - Wild fruits for home consumption and sale (men and women)
  - Charcoal production
    - Mzimba = both men and women
    - Ntchisi = men/boys produce & women/girls sell
  - Beekeeping (to sell honey) (dominated by men in Ntchisi but some women).
- Subsistence farming and agricultural incomes are consistently supplemented by income from the sale of forest products, especially charcoal. A significant source of income – and a critical livelihood strategy – is *ganyu*, i.e. casual hourly or daily labor.
- Plots managed by women produce 25% less per hectare on average than plots managed by men.
- There is a gap between women’s access to extension services and improved seeds and fertilizers compared to men’s access, although men also face serious constraints. Women consistently use lower levels of agricultural inputs on their plots compared to men.
- For the most part, credit is unavailable to both men and women, although where available, there are significant gender differences in the use of that credit.

## **PARTICIPATION AND POWER**

- Female representation and participation in decision making is limited at both the national, district, and community levels. A recent USAID study found that women are about twice as disempowered as men. A primary contributing factor for women is weak community leadership.
- Female representation in Ntchisi District appears to be relatively high at the top levels of governance as compared to Mzimba, although in both districts, the situation was characterized as men make the decisions and women do all of the work.
- To help encourage women to seek positions of leadership, a top district official requested that

- PERFORM replace the term, “village headman,” with “village head” and “chairman” with “chair.”
- Women in Ntchisi are encouraged to participate in public meetings, although some women must seek the permission of their husbands to attend. A few women have community leadership positions. It is not uncommon for a woman to speak at a public meeting, although “her voice is not heard.”
  - Gender-based violence is a significant development challenge for Malawi. The GOM has established Victim Support Units (VSUs) to assist victims of physical and sexual violence as well as “One Stop Centres” in district hospitals, which provide social, medical and police services in one place to victims of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse.
  - According to Mzimba district officials, there is heavy consumption of alcohol by men and, as a result gender-based violence is common, mostly in the form of husbands beating their wives.

## **WOMEN-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

The term “women-headed households” here refers to widows and unmarried, divorced, and abandoned women with children.

- Women-headed households comprise 24% of Malawi’s population overall, and 26.8% of the population in Ntchisi District. Data for Mzimba could not be located.
- Male heads of household have more than twice the number of years of schooling as female heads of household.
- The average landholding in Malawi is 1.2 hectares whereas women-headed households have, on average, landholdings of only 0.80 hectares.
- Women-headed households produce 25% less per hectare than male-headed households.
- On average, women-headed households earn only 60% of the annual income of male-headed households. In both study communities, women-heads of household reported significantly greater reliance on forests to supplement their food supply and income as well as *ganyu*.
- Women-heads of household indicated that the forest provides the greater source of income from the sale of firewood and is more reliable than food and income from their land. Married women said the opposite: agriculture is their biggest source of income for their families.
- Women in Ntchisi communities indicated that one of their greatest challenges is that they have no voice. They are shunned. And without the backing of a husband, they are not considered for community leadership positions.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report includes recommendations for building the gender sensitivity and capacity of PERFORM staff, timesaving opportunities in support of women’s project participation, and programmatic recommendations. Also included are recommendations to PERFORM’s PMEP.

### **GENDER SENSITIVITY AND CAPACITY OF PROJECT STAFF**

- Hire full-time Gender Specialist to lead implementation of the recommendations below.
- Conduct Gender Mainstreaming and Sensitivity training (including periodic refreshers) for:
  - Project staff, including TLC staff
  - District government counterparts and staff in Forestry and Agriculture Departments, and
  - Leaders and members of Area Development Committees (ADCs), Village Development Committees (VDCs), Local Forest Management Boards (LFMBs), Block Management Committee (BMCs), and Village Natural Resources Management Committee (VNMRCs).
- Review and consider using existing manuals developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) and other toolkits already available.

## TIME-SAVING OPPORTUNITIES IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Women's dual burden of domestic and productive work limits the time women have available for participating in project activities. Below are a few opportunities for reducing women's time constraints:

- *High-efficiency cook stoves, prioritizing women heads of household*

The team is aware that PERFORM plans to introduce high-efficiency cook stoves in its target geographies. Women heads of household need to be prioritized for this activity.

- *Wello Water Wheel, prioritizing women heads of household*

A Wello Water Wheel is a 45 liter container that, once filled with water, can be rolled over on its side and pushed with a handle. It is 2.5 times more efficient than carrying water on the head, carrying twice as much water in half the time. <http://wellowater.org/>. At a minimum, PERFORM could purchase a number of them, available for purchase by women's groups.

- *Domestic rain-water harvesting, prioritizing women heads of household*

Domestic rain-water harvesting would also reduce the time burden of collecting water. As with cook stoves, PERFORM could introduce such harvesting to women's groups first and build their capacity to construct, operate, maintain and finance the systems.

- *Solar Sisters, prioritizing women heads of household*

Solar Sisters provide economic opportunities for women by supporting them as entrepreneurs through direct sales of clean energy to their communities in the form of solar-powered lamps and other solar products. <http://www.solarsister.org>.

- *Childcare cooperatives, prioritizing women heads of household*

When children are no longer bound to their mothers backs, but also not yet in school, women must allocate greater time and attention to childcare. To address this, mothers can pool their labor to care for a few neighbor children at a time, ideally, at a local church or mosque. The international non-governmental organization (NGO) World Relief has created such a program with strong support from the GOM.

## PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 2

This section first supplements the Objective 2 language from the PERFORM work plan, inserted here as "track changes." In some cases the revisions just call out gender issues to be considered. In other cases, additional activities are added.

### Objective 2: low-emissions land use opportunities are increased in targeted geographies

- Result 2.1: decentralized land and forest management improved in targeted geographies.
  - Capacity assessment of stakeholders, including gender differentiation; best practices at the level of community and district for Low-emission Development Strategy (LEDS) implementation.
  - Promotion and formation of Local Forestry Organizations (LFOs), ADCs, VDCs, paying particular attention to gender equality in leadership and membership; provide leadership and public speaking training to elected leaders, at a minimum.
  - Capacity building to develop forest management plans, targeting both men and women.
  - Study tour, including equal gender representation of delegates, as well as gender considerations on study curriculum.

- Result 2.2: livelihood opportunities from conservation expanded.
  - Identification and assessment of livelihood opportunities; value chain assessment. Both assessments need to examine the gender differences in livelihoods as well as roles in various value chains.
  - Lead farmer program; although lead farmers are elected by community, and require an abundance of land near roads (often excluding the poorest), consider modification of the program that would allow owners with smaller landholdings to serve as a lead farmer, such as women heads of household.
- Result 2.3: increased forest cover in targeted geographies.
  - Trainings in landscape and forest management, targeting men and women equally, as well as women heads of household. Conduct same-sex trainings until the team confirms that women are comfortable actively engaging and speaking in public. Use visual tools in trainings to accommodate women's lower literacy levels. Provide child care during trainings.
  - Trainings on construction of improved cook stoves, prioritizing women heads of household.
  - Will develop intervention package to address demand for biomass for household consumption and for use in production of cash crops.
  - Communications and information and education campaign (IEC) materials including behavior change communications (BCC) regarding gender-based violence (GBV) and female empowerment. Integrate visual tools such as videos and demonstrations to reach women who are less literate. Disseminate information and materials at locations convenient for women, such as schools and health centers or at meetings where women are known to come.
- Result 2.4: improved forestry extension services and research capabilities.
  - Strategy for research mentorship program, including scholarships and other incentives to ensure equal gender representation.
  - Training extension agents in the measurement protocols for estimating carbon stocks in forestland.
  - Pilot a program, including gender-sensitivity training, for forest managers, attached to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife, to re-train in Community-Based Natural Resource Management.
- Result 2.5: lessons learned, including gendered lessons, effectively communicated to a wide variety of stakeholders in a way that constructively informs the national REDD+ process.
  - Documentation of lessons learned that can be shared in subsequent years.
  - Ensure that stakeholder list for dissemination includes women's rights advocates and NGOs.
  - If women's NGOs are not focused on REDD+ readiness, convene series of meetings raising awareness about REDD+ gender implications and support establishment of women's national task force to engage on REDD+ readiness dialogue.
- Result 2.6: measurable net greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions achieved in targeted landscapes.
  - Estimate ex ante GHG emissions reductions for the project will be estimated using carbon calculator.

In addition to the above recommendations, the following activities are recommended to promote gender equality and female empowerment, consistent with USAID policy.

- Ensure equal representation and participation of men and women in Objective 2 activities.
- Map existing formal and informal women's and men's organizations at the local level, including but not limited to farmer associations and village savings and loans associations.
- To help encourage women to seek positions of leadership, replace the term, "village headman," with "village head" and "chairman" with "chair."
- Link PERFORM participants with adult literacy and numeracy programs implemented by other NGOs, prioritizing women heads of household.
- Design and implement a PERFORM-LUANAR forestry mentor program, in which LUANAR faculty (both male and female) are paired with: (1) secondary school students (both male and female) such a LUANAR program is already underway, operating in other districts; and (2) LFMBs.
- Design and implement public IEC on constitutional rights and guarantees regarding non-discrimination based on sex, freedom of expression and education, etc.
- Support formation, governance, and sustainability of women's, men's, and mixed-gender CBOs and VSL. Monitor which groups are the most successful in each site.
- Design and deliver leadership, advocacy, public speaking, and gender-sensitivity trainings to community governance structures and leaders who share their learning through peer sessions.
- Create and facilitate same-sex safe spaces to discuss gender-related concerns and impacts on family and community; may also be used as a tool for monitoring gender sensitivity, GBV, and allocation of household decision making.
- Design and implement a climate change/legal education school program, expressed through the arts, working with unemployed youth as TAs; youth also conduct community sessions.
- If and when PERFORM engages in any policy or legal analysis, such analyses need to include a gender-specific review.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PMEP

Within the PMEP, the Performance Indicator Table provides a benchmark for program management and reporting. It currently contains the following three indicators for Objective 2:

- 2.1 Number of hectares (disaggregated by pilot sites) of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resources management (NRM) practices
- 2.2 Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of United States Government (USG) assistance
- 2.3 Quantity of GHG emissions, measured in metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance

Of these indicators, Indicator 2.2 is the only unit associated with people, to be disaggregated by sex.

**2.2 Recommended revision:** Given the economic and social marginalization of women heads of household, who rely more on forests for their livelihoods than households headed by males, Section 6 of this report recommends a specific focus on this group. To monitor that focus, further disaggregate by the sex of the head of household in which the counted person resides: (1) headed by a male; or (2) headed by a female, as widows, divorcees, or abandoned women with children.

**2.2 Recommended revision:** The year one target for Indicator 2.2 is 1,500 farmers. As previously noted, women-headed households make up 24% of Malawi's population overall, and 26.8% of the population in

Ntchisi District. Based on this data, set the target for this indicator at no more than 1,125 male-headed households and at least 375 women-headed households.

Indicator 2.1 measures the “number of hectares (disaggregated by pilot sites) of natural resources under improved NRM practices,” targeting 47,000 hectares in year one. As currently measured, the indicator does not capture the identity of the person/institution in control of those lands.

**2.1 Recommended revision:** Assuming that this indicator measures land holdings controlled by individual households, as well as in government forest reserves, disaggregate the data by sex and gender of household head managing the land (male or female).

### ***Monitoring Gender-Based Violence***

As incomes rise and/or as women become more empowered, it is possible for incidents of GBV to also increase in the short term. Given the rule “Do No Harm,” PERFORM needs to monitor the incidence of GBV within its impact area. This indicator is recommended for inclusion in the indicator table:

**2.4 Recommended indicator:** “Number of cases of gender-based violence reported by men and women,” including age and whether living in a male or female-headed household.

### ***Monitoring Men’s and Women’s Leadership Opportunities***

The findings reflect few women in leadership positions in the forest sector and other community structures. To ensure that the project does not perpetuate the official status quo, the following indicator is recommended:

**2.5 Recommended indicator:** “Number of people serving in leadership positions in community governance structures, particularly regarding natural resources management, or other organizations such as CBOs, etc. as well as number of members of these organizations,” disaggregated by sex and gender of household head.

### ***Additional Recommendations for Evaluation***

The above indicators are intended to measure the extent to which both men and women, including women heads of household participate in and benefit from project activities. These next recommendations are to measure progress towards achievement of gender equality and female empowerment and depend on additional programming. They are to be used in the context of baseline household surveys (or other quantitative surveys) that will be conducted at the beginning of the project and the end line surveys.

**Recommendation:** “Proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities.” This indicator assumes that there is some programming on gender equality and sensitivity as well as communications messaging regarding constitutional guarantees of non-discrimination based on sex, gender equality, freedom of expression, etc.

**Recommendation:** “Percentage of target population that views GBV as less acceptable after participating in or being exposed to USG programming.” This indicator assumes that there is some programming on gender equality and sensitivity as well as communications messaging regarding constitutional guarantees of non-discrimination based on sex, gender equality, etc.

**Recommendation:** “Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG-supported training/programming.” Self-efficacy refers to a person’s beliefs in his or her capacity to produce actions that are necessary for achieving desired outcomes/attainments. It is similar to having a

sense of personal agency. This indicator assumes that there are some programming focused on building women's leadership and public speaking skills.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Both the Government of Malawi (GOM) and the USAID seek to achieve gender equality, including in the land and forest sector, so that all Malawians – men, women, boys, and girls – may participate in and benefit from the development of their country.

PERFORM is a partnership between the GOM and USAID, and implemented by Tetra Tech.<sup>1</sup> The premise of PERFORM is that if Malawi's people and government are empowered to make informed management decisions about the forest and soil resources on which they depend, then the quality of life for Malawians will improve. To that end, PERFORM is aligned with the *Malawi Growth and Development Strategy*, promoting the more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of Malawian forests and soils. As such, PERFORM is a core component of environmental programming under USAID's Development Objective Assistance Agreement with the GOM.

Malawians derive many benefits from the Miombo woodlands, including food, water, and fuel. These woodlands, however, are decreasing at one of the highest rates in southern Africa due to unsustainable use of fuel wood and charcoal, poor agricultural practices, limited economic choices, and high population growth. PERFORM seeks to help address these issues by focusing on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) readiness; low-emissions land-use opportunities and planning capacities, sustainability and capacity building; and integration within Malawi's development priorities, including food, water, and fuel.

Because Malawi's GHG emissions are overwhelmingly from the land sector, which is dominated by smallholder farmers, Objective 2 of PERFORM focuses on introducing low-emissions alternatives to smallholders, which provide incomes and food that are competitive with existing livelihoods. Thus, its objective is that low-emissions land use opportunities are increased in priority PERFORM districts. And given that access, control, perception, and use of forest and land have significant gender considerations, gender integration is a critical dimension of PERFORM's work. This *Gender Analysis and Plan* is a key deliverable under PERFORM's First Annual Work Plan, primarily focused on Objective 2.

This *Analysis and Plan* starts in Section 2 by describing the methodology applied. Section 3 summarizes USAID guidance on gender, generally, as well as in the context of REDD+ projects. Section 4 shares international best practices for recognizing and addressing gender differences in REDD+ projects. Section 5 explores gender considerations and constraints for forest and soil management based on desk and field research in PERFORM priority districts. Section 6 looks at the precarious situation of women-headed households. Section 7 provides recommendations for PERFORM's First Year Work Plan. Section 8 provides recommendations for PERFORM's *Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan*.

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<sup>1</sup> This section borrows heavily from PERFORM's *First Annual Workplan* (September 2014-September 2015).



## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

This section briefly describes the methodology used for this *Analysis and Plan*.

The objectives are to:

- Assess gender aspects relevant to the PERFORM Project;
- Develop a comprehensive plan (PERFORM Gender Plan) for addressing gender issues through project implementation, based on the assessment; and
- Help integrate the PERFORM Gender Plan in the project's first year work plan and life of PMEP.

See Appendix A for the Statement of Work (SOW).

The analysis framework and field interview guide are loosely based on USAID's *Six Domains of Gender Analysis* (USAID 2011c), which offers a structure for considering gender differences in key social areas. Note that USAID guidance on applying the *Six Domains* advises that all domains may not be directly relevant to the issue at hand, allowing for flexibility to adapt the framework (USAID 2011c). For purposes of this analysis, the framework was adapted to draw out gender dynamics and differences related to forest and land ownership, control, and use. Due to overlapping content, the six domains were collapsed into four. In so doing, there is less duplication in the analysis.

A review of secondary literature informed this analysis as well as the design of the field interview guide. The review revealed many guidance documents on gender and REDD+, generally (and in Asia), as well as documents on gender relations in Malawi, including gender considerations in land and forest tenure. No analysis was identified, however, specific to gender considerations for REDD+ in Malawi.

### 2.1 SELECTION AND DESCRIPTION OF FIELDWORK SITES

The qualitative field portion of this analysis focused on two of the three priority PERFORM districts: Ntchisi and Mzimba. These two districts were prioritized because the third district, Machinga, had just experienced massive floods, causing the President to declare a State of Disaster, which remained in effect during the field visit.

The team conducted key informant interviews and focus group discussions over 6.5 days in the two districts as well as 3.5 days in Lilongwe, where most stakeholders in the forest sector are headquartered. Ntchisi District in central Malawi is 96% Chewa, one of the major tribal groups in Malawi. Per the work plan, the team focused on the Ntchisi Forest Reserve and its surrounding communities, which are within PERFORM's impact area. The team visited the villages of Nyanja/ Nyanga in Traditional Authority (TA) VusoJere and Nguluwe in TA Nthondo, respectively.<sup>2</sup> Land relations in this area are predominately matrilineal and patrilocal, which is described more fully below.

The six key informant interviews in Ntchisi were with the following district representatives: District Commissioner, District Forest Officer, District Community Development Officer, three members of the ADC (two males and one female), and two members of the LFMB (one male and one female). The team also conducted eight focus group discussions (FGDs) with 118 community members from two villages,

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<sup>2</sup> As of 2005, TA VusoJere was home to 72 villages and TA Nthondo was home to 162 villages (Adreski et al. 2005).

divided into groups by the following characteristics: married men, married women, women heads of household,<sup>3</sup> unmarried male youth, and unmarried female youth.<sup>4</sup>

Mzimba District in the northern region of Malawi is home to Tumbuka and Ngoni tribes. Per the work plan, the team focused on southern Mzimba in communities near the Perekezi Forest Reserve, which is predominately Ngoni. Communities surrounding that reserve are comprised of 43 villages within PERFORM's impact area. The team met with residents of the following villages: Mwalimu Chirwa; Chisusu; Chinombo Tchaya; Daniel Gausi; Kasiyaphazi; Maweru Bulukutu; Mbenje Manda and Amon Moyo; Alick Gausi and Razaro Gausi in TA Mzikubola. As of November 2013, these villages are home to an estimated population of 5,800 (Mzimba Dist. 2014). Land relations in the area surrounding the Perekezi Forest Reserve are predominately patrilineal and patrilocal.

In Mzimba, seven key informant interviews were held with the following district representatives: District Commissioner, District Forest Officer, District Community Development Officer, District Agricultural Officer, Agricultural Gender Roles Extension Support Services Officer, 16 members of the ADC and VDC (4 of which were women), and two members of the LFMB one man and one woman. The team also conducted four FGDs with 56 community members, divided into groups by the following characteristics: married men, married women, women heads of household, and unmarried male youth.

The team consisted of: (1) a Malawian Gender and Forestry Specialist (consultant to PERFORM); (2) a Malawian field coordinator (employee of Total Land Care, a partner to PERFORM); and (3) an international Gender and Land Tenure Specialist, who also served as Team Leader.

## **2.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS**

There are several notable limitations to this analysis. First, the physical scope of the PERFORM impact areas, (i.e. villages surrounding the forest reserves on all sides) is vast. Given the amount of time the team had for field visits, it was not possible to conduct FGDs on all sides of both forest reserves. And yet, tribal, and therefore, diversity in customary law and practice, which define gender roles, appears substantial. Second, key informant interviews in Lilongwe were minimal. Few government and NGO representatives were available to meet; apparently, they were responding to the massive flooding that had recently occurred in the Southern Region. Finally, communities around the Ntchisi and Perekezi Forest Reserves are also beneficiaries of the just-concluding EU-supported, Improved Forest Management for Sustainable Livelihoods Project. Based on many of the FDG participants' responses, it is clear that community members are aware that gender sensitivity and equality are important. What is less clear is whether some of their responses to questions, particularly regarding household decision making by husbands and wives, was in fact their reality or participants were providing answers that they knew to be "correct" from a development perspective.

The effects of these limitations are: (1) findings may not reflect the diversity of practice in the allocation of labor and decision-making authority between men and women within households as well as women's autonomy outside the home; (2) the team did not have the benefit of learning from other development practitioners' approaches and experiences, specifically in the priority districts; and (3) it is not possible to make recommendations regarding potential partnerships between PERFORM and other development actors in the priority districts.

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<sup>3</sup> Women heads of household are defined here as women who: (1) never married but have children; (2) widows; (3) were abandoned by their husbands; or (4) are divorced.

<sup>4</sup> The National Youth Policy defines the social group "youth" as males and females between the ages of 14 and 25.



# 3.0 USAID ON GENDER AND REDD+

The goal of USAID's *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy* is "to improve the lives of citizens around the world by advancing equality between females and males and empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies" (USAID 2012a). The *Policy* acknowledges, "[g]ender equality and female empowerment are now universally recognized as core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of human rights, and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes" (USAID 2012a).

"Gender equality concerns women and men, and it involves working with men and boys, women and girls to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Equality means more than parity in numbers of laws on the books. It means expanding freedoms and improving overall quality of life so that equality is achieved without sacrificing gains for males or females." USAID, *Gender & Female Empowerment Policy*.

USAID further recognizes that "no society can develop sustainably without increasing and transforming the distribution of opportunities, resources, and choices for males and females so that they have equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to their communities" (USAID 2012a).

Note that the policy sets out two objectives: both gender equality *and* female empowerment [see boxes for definitions]. To achieve these objectives, *gender integration* is required, which involves:

[I]dentifying, and then addressing gender inequalities during strategy and project

design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Since the roles and power relations between men and women affect how an activity is implemented, it is essential that project managers address these issues on an ongoing basis (USAID 2012a).

**Female empowerment** is achieved when women and girls acquire the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfill their potential as full and equal members of society. While empowerment often comes from within, and individuals empower themselves, cultures, societies, and institutions create conditions that facilitate or undermine the possibilities for empowerment. USAID, *Gender Equality & Female Empowerment Policy*.

To that end, the contract governing PERFORM requires that the implementer "assess all relevant gender aspects of PERFORM and complete a comprehensive plan for addressing gender issues through the program" (SOW). That contract further recognizes, "In Malawi, gender has a very large influence on key aspects on REDD+ and biodiversity conservation such as land tenure, labor roles and distributions, and exposure to energy-related hazards such as indoor air pollution" (SOW).

The USAID/Malawi *Gender Assessment* (2012) provides further guidance on gender integration:

- In all work with local organizations and non-state actors, gender training will be standard in organizational capacity building modules. An important component of this will be grounding this training in the Malawian cultural context.

- Because the Mission expects work in these areas to enhance women's leadership and voice, BCC around women's empowerment and against GBV must also be included.
- All activities working in the area of organizational capacity building will require specific targets on women's leadership. Whether this is targeting women-led organizations or women's initiatives, or promoting women's leadership in organizations or stakeholder panels, will depend on activity specific objectives.
- In any policy work undertaken through USAID interventions, a gender analysis of relevant policies will be undertaken (USAID 2012b).

In order for women to have time to participate in the implementation of REDD+ programs, and to take on new roles as stakeholders and managers, USAID advises that REDD+ programs must also be designed in a gender-sensitive manner that helps reduce the burden on women and girls in meeting their family's daily needs for food, fuel wood, fodder, and income generation (USAID 2011a).

USAID further advises, "Addressing gender inequalities is not cost neutral. Budgeting for activities to overcome social inequalities is an investment in program effectiveness and sustainability" (USAID 2011a).

REDD+ programs may impact men and women differently. If not considered, women may suffer disproportionately compared to men. For example:

- Women may suffer higher workloads without compensation;
- Women can be displaced from or denied access to forests that they depend on;
- Men may learn more and participate more in public forums while women are left out, widening the knowledge gap; and
- Women may be denied or not receive a fair share of benefits (USAID 2011a).

(See also UN-REDD Programme Strategy 2011-2015).

USAID/Asia provides a *Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Checklist* under its program, Lowering Emissions in Asia's Forests. The Strategy first acknowledges that climate change mitigation has a gender dimension, given women's significant role in forest use and management in many countries. And yet, women typically have limited involvement in and influence over decision-making processes that influence their access and rights to forests and benefits from the forests (USAID 2012). At the same time, the Strategy identifies gender equality as a precondition to effective climate change mitigation:

Because of the important roles women play in forest management, efforts to mitigate climate change will not be sustainable without their effective collaboration and meaningful involvement. The importance of gender equality as a condition for successful approaches to climate change in developing countries has been well documented. Recognizing the importance of women in forest resource management via empowerment is a key strategy for achieving sustainable climate mitigation outcomes (USAID 2012).

Risks to women if gender considerations are not integrated into projects include:

- Women may suffer higher workloads without compensation;
- Women can be displaced from or denied access to forests that they depend on;
- Men may learn more and participate more in public forums while women are left out, widening the knowledge gap; [and]

- Women may be denied or not receive a fair share of benefits (USAID 2011).

A study commissioned to provide practical entry points for women's inclusion in REDD+ programs in the Asia-Pacific identifies ten key enabling interventions as “good practices for strengthening women's inclusion in forest and other natural resource management sectors” (UN-REDD/USAID 2013). Those enabling interventions are:

- Ensuring Women's Representation and Participation
- Facilitation and Capacity Building for Women's Participation
- Skill Building
- Gender-Disaggregated Analysis and Planning to Meet Women's Livelihood Needs
- Labor-Saving and Time-Reducing Technologies
- Women-Only Groups
- Women's Networks and Federations
- Presence of Gender Champions and Women Leaders
- Equitable Benefit Sharing Mechanisms
- Enterprise Development and Credit Provision (UN-REDD/USAID 2013).

The study provides country examples for each enabling intervention.

A recent USAID assessment of REDD+ projects in Asia generated recommendations to ensure that projects have a positive impact on gender equality and women's empowerment as well as to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of REDD+ programs. Excerpts are included below.

***Stakeholder engagement and strategy development***

- Ensure that national and regional-level REDD+ strategies comply with national laws and international agreements (such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) that provide for equal rights and opportunities for women and men.
- Advocate for higher levels of women's membership in governing bodies for community forestry and local and national development/administration, including those that make decisions related to the design of REDD+. Generally, it is considered imperative for women to make up at least 30% of a governing body to ensure effective and sustained participation. However, quotas alone are not the answer, nor are they sufficient to ensure meaningful participation. Any rules regarding women's participation in governing bodies must be accompanied by capacity building, a support network, and efforts to foster their acceptance.
- Seek ways to increase women's engagement by, for example, reducing their workload and biases against their participation, increasing their mobility, and instilling the skills and confidence needed to meaningfully engage. This is especially important at the local scale, where women's lack of education and/or household obligations can restrict effective engagement.

***Institutional strengthening***

- Build in-house capacity to mainstream gender at organizational and program levels, through training and learning networks at national, regional, and international levels, and use of program monitoring indicators to track organizational gender integration and equality.

***Land tenure and governance***

- Support governments in developing land tenure frameworks that officially recognize women's rights to forest products and carbon from forests.

***Forest/protected area laws and management***

- Draw from other sectors and pilot projects to develop innovative strategies to increase and expand women's knowledge and roles as forest managers.
- Develop systems of benefit distribution that recognize and equitably reward men and women's contributions to REDD+ activities, such as forest protection and carbon monitoring.

***Gender-sensitive REDD+ programming***

- A gender analysis should inform the design of REDD+ projects and strategies to ensure the design is responsive to the different needs and roles of men and women.
- Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation tools should be used for REDD+ projects, requiring collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and social indicators that measure changes in status and levels of inequality (USAID 2011b).

## 4.0 FINDINGS

This section relates the findings regarding gender considerations and constraints to achieving sustainable and inclusive forest and soil management, based on both desk and field research. It is organized first with national data and then by the four gender domains: (1) legal rights and status; (2) time and space; (3) access to (and control of) resources; and (4) participation and power. This section concludes with a note about women-headed households. Within each domain, findings from secondary sources are included followed by the qualitative field findings.

The population of Malawi is 17.4 million. Although nearly 85% of the population lives in rural areas, only 23% of the total land area is arable (CIA 2014; FAO 2011; ActionAid 2005). The population is quite young with 54% under 18 years, primarily due to high fertility rate and low life expectancy (FAO 2011).

As one of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 174 out of 187 on the United Nations Human Development Index, over half of all Malawians chronically live below the national poverty line of \$0.26/day (UNDP 2014; USAID 2012b).

There are slightly more females than males among the rural population at 51.7% (FAO 11). Twenty-four percent of rural households are headed by women, whereas in urban areas 15% are headed by women (FAO 2011).

The agricultural sector, including forestry and fishing, is the mainstay of the domestic economy. That sector supports the majority of livelihoods in the country: 85% of men and 94% of women (FAO 2011). Plots managed by women produce 25% less per hectare on average (in terms of gross value of output) than plots managed by men (World Bank. 2014). An estimated 30% of rural incomes are specifically derived from forest resources (FGWG n.d.).

### 4.1 LEGAL RIGHTS AND STATUS

The domain of “Legal Rights and Status” is concerned with the legal treatment and empowerment of men and women. The domain encompasses legal documentation such as identification cards, voter registration, and property titles as well as rights to inheritance, employment, atonement of wrongs, and legal representation (USAID 2011c). Although technically customary law is also included here, to avoid duplication, customary norms and laws are instead discussed in Section 5.3 below under “Access to [and Control of] Resources.”

#### *Gender equality and prohibition of discrimination based on sex*

The Constitution of Malawi (as amended) guarantees equality of the sexes, explicitly according men and women the same rights, including equal protection and legal capacity (Constitution. Art. 24). Discrimination based on sex or marital status is expressly prohibited (*Id.* arts. 20, 24, 31). Further, every family member “shall enjoy full and equal respect and shall be protected by law against all forms of neglect, cruelty or exploitation” (*Id.* art. 22). All persons are entitled to education (*Id.* art. 25).



Consistent with the Constitution, the vision of the *Revised National Gender Policy* is: “A society where men, women, boys and girls equally and effectively participate in and benefit from development process” (GOM 2008). Thus, the goal of the *Policy* is “to mainstream gender in the national development process

**GOM on Gender:**

**Vision:** “A society where men, women, boys and girls equally and effectively participate in and benefit from development process” RNGP 2008.

**Goal:** “To mainstream gender in the national development process in order to enhance participation of women and men, girls and boys for sustainable and equitable development” RNGP 2008.

**Goal:** “To reduce gender inequalities and enhance participation of all gender groups in socio-economic development” MGDS, 2012.

in order to enhance participation of women and men, girls and boys for sustainable and equitable development” (GOM 2008). Similarly, a key goal of the *Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II* is “[t]o reduce gender inequalities and enhance participation of all gender groups in socio-economic development” (GOM 2012).

The Gender Equality Act (2012) now codifies these constitutional guarantees in key matters by prohibiting discrimination based on sex; prohibiting sexual harassment; guaranteeing equal educational opportunities and sexual and reproductive health; and establishing a Human Rights Commission to protect and promote gender equality. The Gender Equality Act also requires that no more than 60% of individuals recruited and appointed for public service shall be of the same sex (§ 11).

***Land and natural resources.***

The Constitution explicitly provides for equal rights to own property:

Women have the right to full and equal protection by the law, and have the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their gender or marital status which includes the right—

- (a) to be accorded the same rights as men in civil law, including equal capacity— . . .
- (ii) to acquire and maintain rights in property, independently or in association with others, regardless of their marital status (§ 24 [emphasis added]).

The *Gender Policy* identifies the goal of “increase[ing] women’s and other vulnerable groups’ access to and control over agricultural productive resources and technologies for food and nutrition security” (GOM 2008a). Some of the strategies identified include to:

- 3.3.2.2 Ensure that women . . . have equitable access to agricultural inputs and services;
- ...
- 3.3.2.4 Promote dissemination of appropriate gender responsive labor and time saving technologies for increased food production, processing, preparation and storage;
- ...
- 3.3.2.6 Promote women’s access to agricultural market information and infrastructure;
- 3.3.2.7 Advocate for research on gender responsive agricultural technologies;
- 3.3.2.8 Lobby for favourable credit conditions for women;
- 3.3.2.9 Encourage women to produce high quality products for sale; and
- 3.3.2.10 Increase access and ownership to land for women (GOM 2008).

And under Natural Resources and Environmental Management, the *Gender Policy* sets forth the goal of: “Equal and equitable participation of women, men, girls and boys and other vulnerable groups in the sound management, conservation and utilization of natural resources and the environment for sustainable

development" (GOM 2008). Under that goal, Objective 1 is "To increase participation and involvement of women, men, girls, boys and vulnerable groups in planning, designing, implementation and evaluation of natural resources and the environment" (GOM 2008a). Strategies for achieving this objective are to:

3.4.2.1 Promote women's participation in community afforestation, water, land management programmes;

...

3.4.2.4 Promote research on gender responsive natural resource management systems;

3.4.2.5 Promote gender analysis and mainstreaming in natural resource policies and programmes; and

3.4.2.6 Raise public awareness on the need of involving women . . . in the management of natural resources and environment (GOM 2008a).

Further, Objective 2 is: "To minimize negative natural resource and environmental impacts thereby enhancing environmental benefits of projects to the majority of the vulnerable groups" (GOM 2008a). Strategies for realizing this objective are:

3.3.3.1 Promote energy saving technologies to reduce women's time and energy on the multiple roles;

3.3.3.2 Promote more involvement of women, men and vulnerable groups in issues of waste management and pollution;

3.3.3.3 Create awareness among women, men, girls and boys on global warming and climate change;

3.3.3.4 Promote organic farming for women and men (GOM 2008a).

The *National Land Policy* (2002) also has a clear gender mandate. Its overall goal is "to ensure tenure security and equitable access to land, to facilitate the attainment of social harmony and broad based social and economic development through optimum and ecologically balanced use of land and land based resources" (GOM 2002). To achieve that goal, the Policy identifies six objectives, the first of which is to: "Guarantee secure tenure and equitable access to land without any gender bias and/or discrimination to all citizens of Malawi as stipulated under Article 28 of the Constitution" (GOM 2002).

The *National Forest Policy* (1996, as supplemented in 2003) and the Forestry Act of 1997 provide a framework for promoting community participation in forest conservation management. That framework identifies gender as a cross-sectoral issue to ensure that "women's role in forest and tree resource utilization and management receives due attention" (GOM 1996). Identified strategies include:

- Support women not only in forest-based subsistence and informal economies but as a key agency for innovative development of the rural forestry sector, including the growing, harvesting, processing and marketing of fuel wood, domestic construction wood and industrial wood;
- Promote the formalisation of linkages between established women's groups and forest extension;
- Give special attention to the support of women in the promotion of forest management, training of professional and technical forestry personnel, forest conservation through participation, and funding of farm forestry;
- Ensure that women in the Forestry Department are offered access to equal opportunities for promotion, training and career development (GOM 1996).

Although the Forestry Act does not explicitly identify gender equality in access, use, and management of forest resources, it uses gender-sensitive, non-discriminatory language.

## ***Family matters***

Both men and women have the constitutional right to marry and start a family but no person shall be forced to enter into a marriage (Constitution. Art. 22). The Constitution recognizes civil marriages (statutory), by custom, and marriages "by repute or permanent cohabitation" (Constitution. Art. 22). The legal age of marriage is 18, although marriage is permitted between the ages of 15 and 18, with consent of the parent or guardian (Constitution. Art. 22). Marriage under the age of 15 is prohibited (Constitution. Art. 22). The Penal Code criminalizes bigamy, with a penalty of five years (§ 162).

In February 2015, Malawi's Parliament voted to enact the Marriage, Divorce, and Family Relations Bill ("Marriage Act") (Global Legal Monitor 2015), which became effective with the President's signature in April 2015 (Human Rights Watch [HRW] 2015).

The new Marriage Act recognizes, as valid and of the same legal status, four types of marriages: civil marriage; customary marriage; religious marriage; and marriage by reputation or permanent cohabitation (§ 12). Recognition of marriage by repute, however, is not automatic and requires a court action (§ 13). The Marriage Act also codifies the legal age of marriage to 18 years, although it maintains the constitutional exception that marriage is allowed between the ages of 15 and 18, with consent of the parent or guardian (§ 14).

The Marriage Act also provides for equal rights to men and women in any recognized marriage (§ 48), including the right to "consummation, companionship, care, maintenance and the rights and obligations commensurate with the status of marriage" (§ 2). Parties to a marriage have a joint duty to maintain each other and any children of the marriage (§ 50). The Marriage Act further provides that monetary contributions of the husband and wife to the marriage must be proportional to their income, and "non-monetary contributions" are to be included in determining contributions of a spouse, including domestic work and management of the home, child-rearing, and companionship (*Id.* §§ 2 & 50).

Parents enjoy equal rights to retain custody, guardianship, and care of children, including decisions regarding children's upbringing (Constitution. Art. 24).

Upon dissolution of a marriage, a woman is entitled to a "fair disposition of property that is held jointly by the husband," and to "fair maintenance, taking into consideration all the circumstances and, in particular, the means of the former husband and the needs of any children (Constitution. Art. 24).

Malawians may draft a will to transfer their property upon death. If there is no will or the will does not dispose of all of the decedent's property, then the immediate family inherits the estate (USAID n.d.b; SIGI n.d.). As between siblings, sons and daughters share the right to inherit equally (Deceased Estates Act §17; USAID n.d.b; SIGI n.d.). The Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act of 2011 protects the inheritance of spouses and children and makes property grabbing a criminal offense, liable for a fine of 1 million Kwacha or imprisonment up to three years (WLSA 2014).

## ***Employment***

Rights in the workplace include protection from sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, equal wages, and a paid maternity leave of eight weeks, accessible only every three years (GEA, §§ 4-6; SIGI n.d.). In public employment, no less than 40% of one sex can be appointed and no more than 60% of one sex employed in any public department, subject to exceptions (GEA, § 11).

## ***A final note***

Few countries have addressed the legal nature and scope of rights to forest carbon, i.e. who owns the carbon and who has the right to exploit the benefits of GHG reductions and removals in REDD+, and the associated rights to international payments. Carbon is a new commodity, an intangible asset in forest ecosystems; rights associated with that asset are either unclear or undeveloped in many countries, including Malawi (Peskett and Brodnig 2011; USAID 2011). As those rights are defined at the country level, gender considerations must be at the forefront of that process.

## 4.2 TIME AND SPACE

The main objective of the “Time and Space” domain is to determine how men and women spend their time and what implications their time commitments have on their availability for program activities (USAID 2011c). This domain captures “gender differences in the availability and allocation of time and the locations in which time is spent. It considers the division of both productive and reproductive labor; the identification of how time is spent during the day (week, month, or year, and in different seasons); and determines how men and women each contribute to the welfare of the family, community, and society” (USAID 2011c).

In the literature, Malawian women are considered “time poor” relative to their male counterparts, carrying a “double burden” of domestic and productive work (USAID 2012b; FAO 2011). As such, compared to Malawian men, time constraints impede Malawian women’s ability to participate in income-generating activities, education, and community governance, all of which can enhance economic returns and wellbeing (FAO 2011). Thus, “[a]ny new activities, such as attending trainings or meetings, will add to their time burden” (USAID 2012b).

In fact, a woman’s allocation of time, particularly her workload, was found to be the third largest contributor to her disempowerment in agriculture. And although allocation of time also was a key contributor to men’s disempowerment, among all of the disempowering factors, the greatest gap exists between women and men’s workloads (USAID 2014).

In terms of domestic or reproductive work, which is primarily in the private sphere, the following data is available:

- 90% of women over the age of 15 years report undertaking domestic activities as compared to 24% of men.
- Women spend an average of 7.7 hours per day on household chores compared to 1.2 hours for men (USAID 2012b).
- Over 20% of young men dedicate 1-10 hours to domestic activities, compared to only 7% of adult men (FAO 2011).
- Rural women spend eight times more time than men collecting firewood and water. Girls spend three times more time on the same tasks as boys (ITFW 2012). As forests shrink and water sources become less accessible, without alternative sources, women and girls will need to allocate more time for meeting their families’ basic needs.
- “There is a significant gender disparity in the amount of time that children aged 5 to 14 allocate to domestic activities.” Girls spend over six times as much time on domestic activities as boys – 16.9 hours/week compared to 2.7 hours per week. Girls dedicate most of their time to cooking (9.7 hours per week) and collecting water (5.4 hours per week). The source does not explain how boys spend those 2.7 hours per week (FAO 2011).

Regarding productive work:

- “Malawian women provide 70% of the labor for small-scale cash crop production” (USAID 2012b). Compared to men, women mostly work on a part-time basis (FAO 2011).
- The “double burden” is heaviest for young rural women due to their greater involvement in productive activities (compared to adult women), yet without a decrease in their domestic workload (FAO 2011).

- A larger share of children in the household significantly reduces the productivity of female-managed plots but does not affect the productivity of male-managed plots (World Bank 2014).
- “Balancing competing time uses, in a framework of almost total inelasticity of the gender division of labor, presents a particular challenge to reducing poverty” (World Bank 2006).

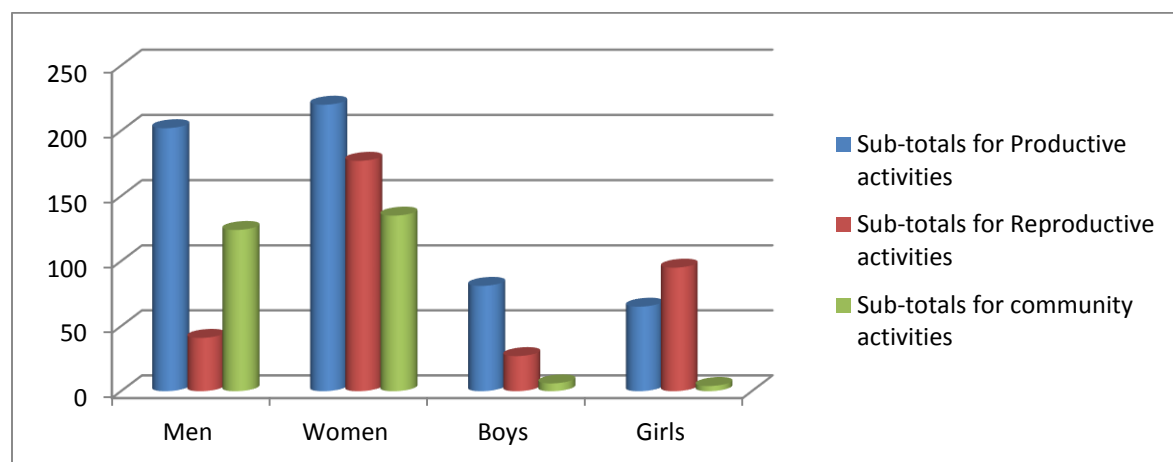
The qualitative findings from Ntchisi and Mzimba are consistent with the literature. Both men and women reported that domestic responsibilities, including childcare, meal preparation, and firewood and water collection are solely women’s responsibility (and to a lesser extent girls’ responsibility), although if the forest is far, men will also collect firewood but largely for sale and not household consumption.

Both men and women work in the fields, although both male and female FGD participants in both districts agreed that women do a greater share of the agricultural labor, while men plan for the household, do some agricultural labor, and otherwise do tasks that require greater strength or are dangerous, e.g. patrolling the forest at night.

Both men and women also take care of small animals such as goats, pigs, and chickens (as do some boys and girls), although men take care of cattle.

A June 2014 study in five Extension Planning Areas (EPA) by the Mzimba South District Agricultural Development Office, Department of Agricultural Extension Services is consistent with these findings. The five EPAs studied all surround the Perekezi Forest Reserve, including Kazomba, Luwerezi, Champhira, Eswazini, and Hora EPAs and are home to both the Ngoni and Tumbuka. A few tables from that study are reproduced here.

In the five EPAs studied, women do more productive and reproductive activities than men, boys, and girls. Interestingly, it also appears that women engage in community activities slightly more than men.

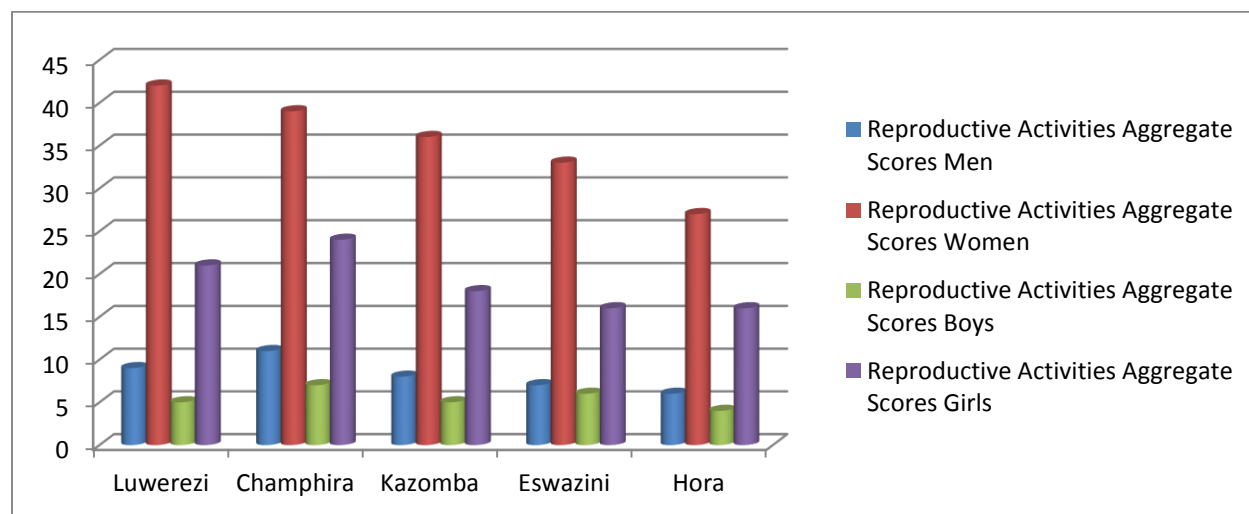


Although not represented in graphs, the Mzimba study also found that women do more agricultural labor than men (although there is no significant difference between boys and girls). Women mostly prepare the land, apply organic fertilizer, weed, harvest, transport, and sell. Men and boys mostly apply herbicides and pesticides (Mzimba 2014).

Marketing of cash crops, such as tobacco, is by men, whereas marketing of food crops such as maize and legumes is done both by women and men (Mzimba 2014).

With respect to livestock, men and boys are overwhelmingly responsible for constructing the housing for livestock (except cutting the grass), grazing, diagnosis and treatment of parasites and diseases, breeding, and milking. The only role women and girls have (more than men and boys) is feeding chickens and pigs. The transport and sale of large livestock is by men and boys, women, and girls sell chickens and ducks (GOM 2014).

In terms of reproductive activities, the Mzimba study shows a substantially higher workload by women on reproductive activities, as indicated by the chart below.



Mzimba 2014.

Thus, women spend most of their time in the private sphere: home and fields (most female FGD participants at first went quiet when asked about women's responsibilities outside the home). On the other hand, men are responsible for representing the household, more oriented to the public sphere.

### 4.3 ACCESS TO (AND CONTROL OVER) RESOURCES

This domain "refers to a person's ability to use the necessary resources to be a fully active and productive participant (socially, economically, and politically) in society" (USAID 2011c).

According to a recent USAID study, the second greatest contributor to women's disempowerment in agriculture is limited access to productive resources, including ownership of assets; purchase, sale, or transfer of assets; and access to and decisions on credit (USAID 2014).

#### *Education*

Nationally, there are significant gender disparities in educational opportunities and competencies. The proportion of adults who never attended school is higher among women, estimated at 28%, compared to 14% of men (HRW 2014). Of the 74% of the population aged 15 years and above that have not attained any educational qualification, 80% are women (HRW 2014).

Among children, however, the introduction of free primary education in 2004 allowed Malawi to achieve gender parity in primary school enrollment in 2011. At the same time, however, only 47.2% of girls and 53.8 % of boys who enroll in standard 1 actually complete standard 8 (USAID 2012b). Of those who drop out of school, many do so before gaining competences in reading and writing (Ngwira 2012).

In terms of literacy, rates are highest in the north, with 92% of men being literate in Mzimba District as

compared to 82.7% of women. Significantly, gaps between men and women increase heading south, with only 61.1% of women being literate in Ntchisi as compared to 73.2% of men. Finally, literacy rates for women in Machinga are alarmingly low at 37.3%, compared to 66.8% of men (FAO 2011).

Literacy Rates in PERFORM Districts			
	Men (%)	Women (%)	Total
<b>Mzimba</b>	92.0	82.7	87.3
<b>Ntchisi</b>	73.2	61.1	67.0
<b>Machinga</b>	66.8	37.3	50.9

The gap in male and female literacy rates has significant programmatic implications, most notably in Machinga.

### ***Land and livestock***

As of 2011, smallholder farmers (which cultivate 90% of Malawi's arable land) cultivated on average one hectare of land, while 30% cultivated less than 1/2 of a hectare (FAO 2011; USAID 2013c). The average landholding is 1.2 hectares whereas women-headed households have, on average, landholdings of only 0.80 hectares (USAID 2012b). None of the FGD participants were landless and district commissioners indicated that landlessness is not an issue for their respective districts.

In the Ntchisi sites visited, participants' land holdings ranged from an estimated 0.4 ha (1 acre) to 2.4 ha (5.9 acres). In the Mzimba sites visited, participants' land holdings ranged from an estimated 0.4 ha (1 acre) to 2.8 ha (7 acres). Women-heads of household in both districts reported consistently smaller parcels than those of married couples.

In the communities visited in both districts, FGD participants grow maize, groundnuts, soybeans, cassava, Irish potatoes, millet, and tobacco.

Women-headed households typically lack the male labor required for strenuous agricultural tasks such as plowing, and also lack the income needed to hire male labor. As a result, they cultivate smaller plots and generate lower yields (FAO 2011). For all maize varieties, plots operated by men had higher yields than those operated by women (FAO 2011).

Significant regional differences exist between patrilineal and matrilineal systems regarding the customary ownership and inheritance of land (Kishindo 2006; Khaila 2012). The northern region, including Mzimba District, is predominately patrilineal, with land owned by males and passing from father to son. In contrast, the central (Ntchisi) and southern (Machinga) regions are predominately matrilineal, with land ownership by women and inheritance passing from mother to daughter (We Effect 2013). Under both the patrilineal and matrilineal systems in Malawi, decisions pertaining to customary land are primarily made by men and property rights are vested in men (WLSA 2014). Particularly within matrilineal communities, however, the system is complicated by the location where a newly married couple takes up residence.

Regional and tribal differentiation throughout Malawi, likely in part due to the distribution of matrilineal and patrilineal systems governing land relations, makes it difficult to generalize. In addition, patrilocal and matrilocal customs exist in both patrilineal and matrilineal communities, adding further complexity to understanding the informal law and customs that govern women and men in rural Malawi.

### ***Ntchisi: Around Ntchisi Forest Reserve***

In both villages visited in Ntchisi, a matrilineal/patrilocal custom is most prevalent, called "*chitengwa*," whereby the bride moves to her husband's village, although a less common, matrilocal custom was also present, whereby the new husband moves to his wife's village, called "*chikamwini*." Ntchisi FGD

participants indicated that they have been practicing *chitengwa* since “time immemorial.”

Given that in the Ntchisi sites visited, communities primarily practice matrilineal/patrilocal customs, which is less common among matrilineal communities, the Ntchisi findings here may not necessarily be representative of all communities along the perimeter of the Ntchisi Forest Reserve.

The literature regarding household allocation of decision making regarding agricultural land; i.e. which crops to grow, when to sell surplus, how much surplus to sell; overwhelmingly concludes that husbands make such decisions. The overall message from Ntchisi District officials also is that men make the decisions and women do the work.

In contrast, both male and female FGD participants in Ntchisi consistently reported that together husbands and wives make decisions regarding their agricultural land, except whether to sell the land, which is the husband’s decision (despite that this community is matrilineal). One female participant explained that joint decision making is “because of ‘gender,’ which means they [husbands and wives] do all things together.” A few female FGD participants broke with the majority, however, indicating that when a wife is younger, decisions are made jointly, and when a wife is older, she informs her husband of her decisions.

Female FGD participants in Ntchisi indicated that sometimes the land belongs to their husbands and sometimes the land belongs to both of them. When a husband passes away, whether a widow inherits his land depends on whether she has a strong relationship with her in-laws. Also, if the children are young, the widow will take the children and return to her natal home. In that case, the children will not claim the land of their father but will inherit land from her mother’s family. If the children are older, and relations with the in-laws are strong, the widow will stay and inherit the land – as will her sons.

Only sons inherit because daughters leave home. But, in fact, both male and female participants agreed that daughters can return home (regardless of the circumstances) and their brothers will share the land. According to one unmarried male youth, “because everyone needs to eat.”

Women indicated that some prefer *chitengwa* because then their husbands are respected. And if there is a quarrel between them, or she is mistreated, she can return to her maternal home. Married men indicated that under such circumstances, “when things have gone bad,” he typically will follow her and relocate to her maternal home.

All of the 35 women heads of household participants were living on their maternal land, having returned after their husbands had passed away. They confirmed that their children would only inherit the maternal land, not land in their father’s village. Women who never marry but have children continue to live on their mother’s land. All of the women heads of household indicated that they make all of the decisions regarding their agricultural land. It is not common for there to be an uncle or other male relative exerting pressure or influencing them regarding their agricultural land (a common statement in the literature).

#### Mzimba: Around Perekezi Forest Reserve<sup>5</sup>

Unlike in Ntchisi, the Ngoni and Tumbuka of Mzimba district practice patrilineal and patrilocal customs. Perhaps that is the reason that almost every district official commented about the extensive control that husbands exert over their wives. In some fashion, officials described the marital relationship as husbands

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<sup>5</sup> Unlike in Ntchisi where the team visited two villages, in Mzimba, FGD participants travelled to a central location to meet the team. As such, there were residents from nine villages, all located adjacent to the Forest Reserve.



make the decisions and wives do all of the work. Several indicated that husbands decide which crops to produce, when to harvest, how much to sell, when to sell, and how much to hold in reserve. Although either husbands or wives can sell, the husbands decide how to use the money. Says one official, “a small proportion of men sit down with their wives.” Wives may have some discretion to purchase household goods but, “if he wants his share, he’ll get it.”

To some extent, this control may be explained by the payment of *lobola*, or bride price, by the groom’s parents to the bride’s parents, which can rise to the level of a contract. According to a district official, “to some extent, women are property . . . . They [men] own women.” Because of the contractual nature of *lobola*, if the marriage fails due to either of their behavior, the wife and/or her parents must repay *lobola*, which is near to impossible for most rural women and their parents.

District officials also indicated that women heads of household are provided access to land but have no control. Most live with their in-laws so have no decision-making authority.

Findings from FGDs, however, are not entirely consistent with the key informant interviews (KII). In every FGD with men, there was a spectrum of responses regarding who makes decisions about the agricultural land, income, etc., from the husband making all of the decisions to couples making decisions jointly. In the women’s groups, there was greater emphasis on joint decision making by couples. And when a woman is older, she will make decisions instead of her husband. When pressed, several groups explained that the broad differences in opinions reflect a changing of the times.

Even more striking were the responses regarding decision making in women-headed households. Women heads were adamant that they make their own decisions regarding the land and income, without the influence of an in-law or other person.

The discrepancies between the KIIs and FGDs may be due to one of two factors, or a combination of both. As mentioned earlier, district officials indicated that the majority of residents around the Perekezi Forest Reserve are Ngoni and that Ngoni are far more male-dominated than in other communities. The spectrum of responses – even to the point of joint decision making – in the FGDs may be a result of majority Tumbuka responses because Tumbuka’s are known as less patriarchal than Ngoni. Second, as mentioned above in Ntchisi, communities around the Perekezi Forest Reserve clearly had been exposed to gender-sensitivity campaigns (in the EU project) at a minimum. Participants may have wanted to provide responses that reflect their sensitivity to gender – or are aspirational (particularly the women) – rather than their reality.

## ***Forests***

Forestry resources supply about 90% of Malawi’s energy sources and contribute over 30% to rural incomes (NORAD 2009; FGWG n.d.). Production of and trade in charcoal is considered Malawi’s most substantial, “pro-poor” forest industry, employing an estimated 93,000 people as producers, transporters, and roadside or urban vendors (NORAD 2009 at 26). Forest products are collected throughout the year, but November to May is the critical period of collection when forest foods are used to supplement families’ food supply, which becomes inadequate (Mwale et al. 2013).

The communities around the Ntchisi and Perekezi Forest Reserves are no different. Both men and women reported that they collect forestry resources for both home consumption and sale, with few differences between the sexes:

- Firewood for home energy and for sale (men and women)
- Mushrooms for home consumption and sale (men and women)
- Wild fruits for home consumption and sale (men and women)

- Flying ants for home consumption and sale (men and women)
- Medicinal herbs for home consumption (collected by women only)
- Construction materials (home use and sale) (by men)
- Materials to make ropes (home use) (by men)
- Charcoal production
  - ✓ Mzimba = both men and women
  - ✓ Ntchisi = men/boys produce and women/girls sell
- Beekeeping (to sell honey) (dominated by men in Ntchisi but some women).

The only products singled out for women are medicinal herbs and wild fruits for home consumption and for men are construction materials and ropes for home use and sale. Both women and men also participate in patrolling the forest and in the construction of fire breaks.

Participation and leadership in forest governance is discussed in Section 5.4 below.

### ***Income and employment***

Poverty is a critical issue, and it disproportionately affects women-headed households. As of 2011, 49% of all male-headed households were estimated to be below the national poverty line, compared with 57% of households headed by women (World Bank 2014).

There are limited opportunities for regular wage employment in rural Malawi, although 9% of men and 2% of women are so engaged (FAO 2011). Although in Mzimba there are small-scale gemstone mining and timber companies, none of the FGD participants were formally employed.

Subsistence farming is the primary source of unpaid rural employment, aka *ulimi*. The *ulimi* sector is primarily comprised of a labor force that has not completed formal education (FAO 2011). Ninety-three percent of Malawian rural women work as *mlimi*, compared to 79% of men. Plots managed by women produce 25% less per hectare on average (in terms of gross value of output) than plots managed by men (World Bank 2014).

A significant source of income – and a critical livelihood strategy – is *ganyu*, i.e. casual hourly or daily labor. *Ganyu* is common among women and men, although it appears that women-headed households are the most reliant on *ganyu* to supplement their income. FGD participants reported no gender-differentiated *ganyu* wages. Male-headed households are more likely to grow cash crops: tobacco, sugar, tea, and vegetables, while female headed household concentrate on subsistence crops: maize, legumes, grains. This also is reflected in 19% of male-headed households growing tobacco versus 7% of female-headed households (USAID 2012b).

All of the participants reported that they must supplement their agricultural-based food supply and income with the sale of forest products, especially charcoal. In addition to *ganyu*, both men and women collect and sell firewood, mushrooms, flying ants, and wild fruits from the forest; engage in beekeeping for honey production; produce and sell charcoal; and bake and sell fritters (women only). Most FGD participants reported that income generated from charcoal sales is used during lean periods to buy food and during growing seasons to buy fertilizer in small quantities (a basin full) for maize production. They purchase smaller quantities because a 50 kg bag of fertilizer is unaffordable to households, especially women-headed households.

### ***Inputs***

Global data on access to extension services show relatively low levels of contact between farmers and

extension agents, with disproportionately lower levels of contact for women (MEAS 2013). As one expert advises, “Extension takes place in complex environments structured *a priori* by gender relations.... Conceptualizing extension as a technical value-free activity is seriously mistaken” (MEAS 2013 [quoting Farnworth 2010]). In Malawi, there is a gap in women’s access to extension services and improved seeds and fertilizers compared to men’s access, although men also face serious constraints.

Generally, Malawian women consistently use lower levels of agricultural inputs on their plots compared to men (World Bank 2014). Only 7% of women-headed households took advantage of agriculture extension services compared to 13% of male headed households, provided by primarily male extension workers (USAID 2012b). Women also are less likely to have access to subsidized inputs (Ngwira 2012). (The Farm Subsidy Input Program has been found to favor the most food-secure households [IFAD n.d.]).

According to the World Bank, “[t]his disparity [in use of inputs] accounts for more than 80% of Malawi’s gender gap in agricultural productivity. Differences in the quality of these inputs and the returns they yield drive the remainder of the gap” (World Bank 2014). Moreover, the productivity of women-managed plots is significantly reduced in households with a greater number of children, although children in the household does not affect the productivity of plots managed by men (World Bank 2014). Ensuring that women use similar amounts of inputs to men could narrow the overall productivity gap to only 4.5% and entirely eliminate the gap among the least productive farmers (World Bank 2014).

The Mzimba study concluded that “inadequate knowledge and skills by female farmers on recommended agricultural technologies results in low adoption rates and returns” (GOM 2014).

Both male and female FGD participants shared that few, if any, farmers have access to improved seeds and few are able to use little, if any, fertilizer on their land (although there was a brief mention of learning how to make compost). Few, if any, also had ever benefitted from extension services. Reasons cited are the “exorbitant” price for fertilizer and the extensive distances to travel for extension services. Several participants indicated that the fertilizer bags are too large to allow them to purchase fertilizer (due to the cost) so they try to purchase smaller amounts, “a plateful,” according to a woman-head of household. Participants also shared their dissatisfaction with the Farm Input Subsidy Program, noting that even when they have vouchers, they do not have access to the markets where they can use the vouchers or fertilizer is just not available in the markets. As a consequence, soils are depleted, reducing yields, and the land can no longer feed their families.

### ***Credit***

Access to credit also is a critical constraint for both rural men and women. In 2010, the GOM reported that there is a gender gap in access to credit, with only 11% of women accessing credit, compared to 14% of men (SIGI n.d.). Men are the primary borrowers for agricultural loans while women often use loans to start non-agricultural businesses (USAID 2012b).

As of 2009, 100% of the credit available in Ntchisi District was in cash as opposed to farm inputs or business loans. The two sources of credit in Ntchisi are friends and relatives (76.5%) and informal moneylenders (23.5%). The primary purpose of the loans was to purchase food (76.5%), to purchase inputs (11.8%), for capital inputs (5.9%), and 5.9% was unspecified (NORAD 2009). The source does not contain similar data for Mzimba District.

When credit is available, there are significant gender differences in the use of that credit. In four districts, including Ntchisi, approximately 61% of male-headed households used their credit to purchase food and 25% used their credit as start-up capital for a business. In contrast, 32% of women-headed households used their credit for purchase of food and inputs, and 6.4% for starting businesses (NORAD 2009).

Similarly, few FGD participants reported that they have access to credit and there appears to be no greater access by men or women. Formal credit is completely unavailable at the sites visited as are moneylenders. Family is the main source of informal credit. Credit through Village Savings and Loans (VSL) is infrequently available. Although there are a few mixed-gender VSL functioning in Ntchisi, supported by World Vision International, there are reportedly not enough groups to cover all interested households. None of the FGD participants were VSL members, and many no longer function due to defaults. ADC members suggested that PERFORM only support mixed-gender VSL because of the 50/50 rule and because “men don’t have the spirit of saving.” To the limited extent VSL exist, they appear to be more available to women in the Ntchisi sites than in the Mzimba sites.

#### **4.4 PARTICIPATION AND POWER**

This section combines the domains of Practices and Participation<sup>6</sup> with Power and Decision making.<sup>7</sup> Because the land and forest activities that men and women do in their daily lives, as well as household decision making, are discussed in Section 5.3 above, this section will explore men’s and women’s participation and degree of influence in government and community.

Female participation and leadership in government and community is important in promoting gender equality and in ensuring gender-sensitive policies and programs: it is a “fundamental prerequisite for gender equality... and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women” (FAO 2011).

Malawi currently ranks 85<sup>th</sup> out of 139 countries in female representation in a lower house of parliament (Gwaza 2014; Masina 2014; Inter-Parliamentary Union 2015). Since 2009, Malawi’s 50:50 Campaign has promoted equal gender representation and participation in decision making. Despite gains in equalizing key positions in parliament and government, the 50:50 Campaign saw a setback in the May 2014 national elections, with only 32 seats in parliament going to women, out of the 250 women who ran for a parliamentary seat. In 2009, there were 43 women parliamentarians and 27 women in 2004 (Gwaza 2014). The current sitting parliament is only 16% female — well below the 50% target in the Southern African Gender Protocol, to which Malawi is a signatory (Dionne & Dulani 2015).

Women candidates in local elections fared no better. Over 2,000 women ran for the 462 positions of local councilor. Only 12%, or 56 women, were elected (Gwaza 2014; Masina 2014; Dionne & Dulani 2015).

Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare faults the patriarchal nature of Malawian society, which she said looks down upon women: “Most people who vote people into power are those in the village. Within their cultures there are aspects that they believe in, so if in my culture I believe a woman cannot be my boss, I will not vote for a woman,” she said. “It’s not a question of the ministry doing something about [it], it’s about every Malawian – how do they view and look at women. It’s an ordinary chief in the village – how does he view and look at a woman” (Masina 2014).

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<sup>6</sup> This domain refers to “peoples’ behaviors and actions in life – what they actually do – and how this varies by gender roles and responsibilities. The questions include not only current patterns of action, but also the ways in which men and women may engage differently in development activities. Some of these types of action include attendance at meetings and training courses, and accepting or seeking out services. Participation can be both active and passive” (USAID 2011c).

<sup>7</sup> The Power and Decision making domain “pertains to the ability of people to decide, influence, control, and enforce personal and governmental power. It refers to one’s capacity to make decisions freely, and to exercise power over one’s body, within an individual’s household, community, municipality, and state. This domain also details the capacity of adults to make household and individual economic decisions including the use of household and individual economic resources, income, and their choice of employment. Additionally, this domain describes the decision to vote, run for office, enter into legal contracts, etc.” (USAID 2011c).

### ***Community participation and leadership***

A recent USAID study found that, “overall, [Malawian] women are about twice as disempowered as men” (USAID 2014 at 23). A primary contributing factor for women is weak community leadership, under which the indicators are group membership and comfort in public speaking (USAID 2014 at 23). That study explains, “Group membership provides an important source of social capital and access to networks, which are both empowering in themselves and may also be an important source of agricultural information or inputs” (USAID 2014).

Gender representation in Ntchisi District appears to be relatively positive at the top levels of governance. The Ntchisi District Chairperson (a woman) reported that most of the district leadership is female, such as the District Forest Officer and the District Agricultural Development Officer. And there is at least 30% representation of women – and sometimes more – in the local governance structures, such as the ADCs and VDCs. ADC members attributed these statistics to the engagement of many NGOs in the community. (A list the team obtained shows 28 NGOs working in Ntchisi District in various sectors).

Among the 30 Agricultural Extension Development officers, five are women, and all of the Agricultural Extension Development Coordinators are men. In addition, their lead farmer program includes both men and women as lead farmers. And as a result of the Competitiveness and Job Creation and Support Program (CJCSP), funded by the African Development Bank, the support for production and marketing cooperatives has so far resulted in 75% female membership and 25% male membership.

Among the Ntchisi forestry department personnel, the District Forestry Officer (DFO) is female, the Assistant DFO is male, the forester is female, and there are 3 male and 2 female forestry assistants. There are more men than women serving as forest guards and patrolmen.

There are not as many women serving as village headmen, however. To help encourage women to seek positions of leadership, the DC requested that PERFORM replace the term, “village headman,” with “village head” and “chairman” with “chair.”

Ntchisi women participate in co-management of the forest, primarily in weeding, planting, and caring for nurseries. Men do the fire management, patrols, and make the decisions regarding benefits.

In Ntchisi, female FGD participants indicated that they are encouraged to participate in public meetings, although some women must seek the permission of their husbands to attend. A few women have leadership positions, such as church elder and forest block committee secretary. They also indicated that it is not uncommon for a woman to speak at a public meeting, although “her voice is not heard.” Some women asked for greater transparency in elections for community positions, noting that men do things “behind the scenes” over and over again. Men in the FGDs perceive participation in community meetings to be equal between the sexes.

The DFO reports that one of their main challenges is that men make the decisions and women do all of the work. Also, men speak more at meetings. Several Ntchisi officials cited low literacy rates among women as a key constraint to women’s assumption of leadership positions within community governance structures.

The situation in Mzimba District is somewhat different. There are few women in positions of leadership in the district agriculture and forestry offices, although there are 11 women out of 51 serving as Agricultural Extension Development Officers. And there are roughly 87 forestry personnel, of which 67 are men.

Membership on the 15-member ADC is approximately 9 men and 6 women. It was not possible to collect data on the VDCs because the team met with representatives from so many different VDCs. As with Ntchisi, the ADC and VDCs members are aware of the 50:50 campaign and strive to reach that goal. The LFMB with whom the team met includes 7 men and 3 women members. According to both the male and female key informants, women members can and will disagree with a man's opinion and there will be meaningful discussion.

One district official explained that women are not given leadership roles because "men are the gatekeepers," and as such there is not equal representation of men and women. In addition, women shy away from leadership positions and men take advantage of that fact. Another explained, in Ngoni culture, "No married woman can come forward and voice an opinion. It is prohibited, although it is changing with time."

Interestingly, another district official has "never noticed men monopolizing" in the forestry sector. The reason he gave is that men do not yet have a sense of ownership over the forest blocks, so they are not yet asserting control. But, according to him, that is the risk of community based forest management (CBFM): as CBFM takes hold, men will assert ownership over the forests to the detriment of the forests and the exclusion of women.

### ***Gender-based violence***

Gender-based violence is a significant development challenge for Malawi. One of the overall objectives of the *Revised National Gender Policy* is to "eliminate gender-based violence from the Malawian society" (GOM 2008 at 6). The *Gender Policy* identifies four related policy goals with many strategies under each, which are too voluminous to include here. (See GBV excerpts from the *Policy* at Appendix C.)

According to USAID, GBV is defined as:

[V]iolence that is directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex, gender identity, or perceived adherence to socially defined norms of masculinity and femininity. It includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse; threats; coercion; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; and economic deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life. Gender-based violence can include female infanticide; child sexual abuse; sex trafficking and forced labor; sexual coercion and abuse; neglect; domestic violence; elder abuse; and harmful traditional practices such as early and forced marriage, "honor" killings, and female genital mutilation/cutting (USAID n.d.).

Significantly, the term "GBV" is often thought of as referring solely to violence against women and girls, but it is important to remember that boys and men also are vulnerable to and experience GBV.

A GOM definition of GBV could not be found. "Domestic violence" is considered a criminal act under the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, broadly encompassing emotional, financial, physical and sexual abuse (SIGI n.d.). It encompasses spousal and familial relations as well as unmarried intimate relations (SIGI n.d.). Significantly, the Act omits marital rape; only rape between unmarried persons is a crime (SIGI n.d.). The Gender Equality Act prohibits "sexual harassment," defined as "any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature in circumstances under which a reasonable person, having regard to all circumstances, would have anticipated that the other person would be offended, humiliated, or intimidated" (§ 6).

Violence against women is frequently viewed as a private family affair with few women reporting it

(HRW 2014). According to the 2010 Demographic Health Survey (DHS), approximately 41% of all women and girls in Malawi have experienced physical or sexual violence (HRW 2014). They report experiencing “controlling behaviors from a husband or intimate partner, such as insisting on knowing where they are at all times (51%), and being jealous or angry if they talk to other men (43%)” (HRW 2014). As of 2013, 30% of reported cases of GBV are prosecuted (GOM 2013).

Several studies have shown that although there are acts of domestic violence committed against women by persons in positions of authority (such as members of the VDC or forestry personnel, the majority of incidents cited by both men and women occur in the home between people in domestic relationships (White 2007 at 26 [citing multiple studies]).

According to the World Bank, poverty and a lack of economic opportunity make men more likely to engage in violence and substance abuse, which only increases the risk of GBV. In addition, when traditional gender norms are challenged, resulting in improved women’s empowerment, GBV may temporarily increase (World Bank 2009b).

As part of the GOM’s strategy to eliminate GBV, it has established Victim Support Units (VSUs) to assist victims of physical and sexual violence (GOM 2013). VSUs provide advice, counseling, financial support for transportation, and first aid and will refer individuals for medical examination and treatment, where appropriate. VSUs also conduct awareness raising on human rights and policing. VSUs have handled an increasing number of cases each year, with recorded cases numbering 4,933 in 2005, up to 7,700 in 2009 (Department for International Development n.d.). In Ntchisi, there are 10 VSUs that report monthly and the data is compiled at the traditional authority level and smaller structures within the villages. There are also such units in Mzimba, although more information is needed.

The Government also has established “One Stop Centres” in district hospitals, which provide social, medical and police services in one place to victims of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse (UN Malawi 2014). The relationship between VSUs and One-Stop Centres is not clear.

Unlike in Ntchisi, almost every district official commented – without the team asking – about the prevalence of the heavy consumption of alcohol by men and GBV in the district, mostly husbands beating their wives. As described by one official, GBV is “very, very common.” (Growing millet and brewing and selling beer is occurring in “every village,” it is part of the culture and a source of livelihood.) They indicated that some older women also drink. They indicated that GBV is mostly by men against women, but occasionally it will be the reverse, although much less reported. They note that drinking alcohol is culturally synonymous with being Ngoni and that “culture” is hindering development in the district. When a family is experiencing income constraints, it is difficult to buy beer so husbands beat their wives. And as income increases, husbands assert greater control, and beatings occur. And as women become empowered, traveling to the market and trainings, husbands believe their wives are having extra-marital affairs and so beatings occur.

Domestic violence came up frequently in the Mzimba women’s FGDs, while discussing men’s domestic responsibilities: “But then some men go drinking and then there is no peace.” Women explained that that means wives are beaten, estimating in their community that eight out of every ten women experience physical violence at the hands of their husbands. They were also quick to point out that they also experience verbal harassment. A discussion of beatings or harassment did not arise in any of the KIIs or FGDs in Ntchisi. Ntchisi women explained that they do seek the permission from their husbands to attend public meetings and also when they are going to travel very far (to a market, for example). If the market or other destination is close, however, they do not have to ask permission.

According to USAID/Malawi, “any change [in male-dominated power dynamics] would be perceived as a threat to male power, often with dire consequences for women” (USAID 2012b at 15). Thus, assuming PERFORM is successful in promoting gender equality in its programming as well as supporting female empowerment, FAO advises: “[t]he risk of GBV or increase in violence should always be considered in the design, implementation and monitoring of livelihood interventions.” For example, domestic violence may increase due to women’s involvement in programmatic income-generating activities and/or as competition for scarce resources rises (FAO n.d.). In the end, however, when women have a higher economic status, there is greater protection against GBV (World Bank 2009b).

### ***Child marriage***

The issue of early, forced marriage is included here because Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world and it is included within USAID’s definition of GBV. According to HRW, “Child and forced marriage are deeply entrenched in Malawi’s traditions and patriarchal cultures, which encourage early sexual initiation and marriage and women’s subordination in society, but stigmatize adolescent pregnancy. Marriage is regarded as a means of protecting girls who get pregnant from undermining family honor” (HRW 2014). The most recent data on child marriage is from a 2014 HRW report on child marriage in Malawi:

- The United Nations Population Fund ranks Malawi number 8 out of the top 20 countries with the highest rates of child marriage. Child marriage in Malawi also is higher than the average for sub-Saharan Africa, which is 37%;
- Child marriage is common in both rural and urban areas across all three regions of Malawi;
- In 2010, 50% of women aged 20–24 years were married or in union before age 18, compared to 6.4% of boys;
- Fifty percent of girls will be married by the age of 18. Data shows little to no change in child marriage prevalence since 2000 where it stood at 47%.
- Twelve percent of women were married before the age of 15 compared to only 1.2% of men.
- Malawi’s Human Rights Commission noted in 2005 that girls may be forced to marry as early as 9 years, before or immediately after attaining puberty, so long as they look physically mature. Boys of the same background generally married around the age of 17.

Child marriage is relevant here because it significantly impedes girls’ education, perpetuating female disempowerment and the cycle of poverty.

## **4.5 A NOTE ABOUT WOMEN-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

This section calls attention to the precarious situation of women-headed households, generally, and in the study communities, specifically. Again, the term “women-headed households” here refers to widows and unmarried, divorced, and abandoned women with children.

A few national statistics on women-headed households indicate that women-headed households comprise 24% of Malawi’s population overall, and 26.8% of the population in Ntchisi District (NORAD 2009). Data for Mzimba could not be located.

In terms of education, women-headed households are particularly disadvantaged. FAO reports that, on average, male heads of household have more than twice the number of years of schooling as female heads of household. In the lowest expenditure quintile, women heads of household have, on average, one year of education as compared to the four years of their male counterparts. In the middle quintiles women heads have exactly half the number of years (FAO 2011).



A study in Mulanje District found that, “women in female-headed households were found to not participate in businesses or formal employment at all, making farming (on their own land, or others’ farms on which they participate in *ganyu* labor) and informal selling of produce their only sources of livelihood. This suggests that, while women-headed households do have access to land in these villages, they lack labor power and access to the capital necessary to run businesses or otherwise diversify their livelihoods” (USAID 2013b).

Women-headed households produce 25% less per hectare than male-headed households (World Bank 2014). One study found that number of households that had staple food till the next harvest was only 7.1% and 3.5% for male- and female-headed households, respectively (NORAD 2009).

Perhaps not surprisingly, FAO indicates:

Poverty has a distinct gender dimension in Malawi. The incidence of poverty and ultra-poverty appears to be higher in female-headed households – the proportion of poor and ultra-poor is 58 percent and 27 percent, respectively, in female-headed households and 51 percent and 21 percent for male-headed households. On average, female-headed households earned only 60 percent of the annual income of male-headed households. About 60 percent of the expenditure of female-headed households was on food, whereas for male-headed households it was 54 percent (FAO 2011).

These figures are consistent with the team’s findings from FGDs in the study communities. In both communities, women heads of household reported significantly greater reliance on forests to supplement their food supply and income. They also reported greater reliance on *ganyu*. Women heads of household reported consistently smaller parcels and lower yields. Their land is depleted and they cannot afford fertilizer or other inputs, and they cannot hire labor. Many indicated that they are food insecure.

Women heads of household in Mzimba indicated that the forest provides the greater source of income from the sale of firewood and is more reliable than food and income from their land. Married women said the opposite: agriculture is their biggest source of income for their families.

Women heads of households also indicated that, as single parents, they struggle to feed and clothe their children, as well as sending them to school. Although primary education is free, if students are not wearing school uniforms (which are not free), they are forced to leave school. One woman shared that her children are not in school and so they are the ones causing deforestation – and will continue to do so because they have no education.

Finally, women in the Ntchisi communities indicated that one of their greatest challenges is that they have no voice. They are shunned. And without the backing of a husband, they are not considered for community leadership positions. Women heads in Mzimba, however, did not experience such challenges.

# 5.0 PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 GENDER SENSITIVITY AND CAPACITY OF PROJECT STAFF

PERFORM recommends the following actions to directly build the capacity of project staff to address the address priority issues

- Conduct Gender Mainstreaming and Sensitivity training (including periodic refreshers) for:
  - Project staff, including TLC staff,
  - District government counterparts and staff in Forestry and Agriculture Departments (The European Union project provided such training but officials in both districts indicated that because such training was a long time ago and there has been a lot of staff turnover, they welcome gender-sensitivity training by PERFORM), and
  - Leaders and members of ADCs, VDCs, LFMBs, BMCs, VNMRCs.
- Review and consider using existing manuals developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and LUANAR and other toolkits already available.

## 5.2 TIME-SAVING OPPORTUNITIES IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

### *High-efficiency cook stoves, prioritizing women heads of household*

The team is aware that PERFORM plans to introduce high-efficiency cook stoves in its target geographies. Women heads of household need to be prioritized for this activity.

### *Wello Water Wheel, prioritizing women heads of household*

A Wello Water Wheel is a 45 liter container that, once filled with water, can be rolled over on its side and pushed with a handle. It is 2.5 times more efficient than carrying water on the head, carrying twice as much water in half the time (<http://wellowater.org/>). In some countries, men have started to fetch water for the household because the Water Wheel is an interesting innovation.

At a minimum, PERFORM could purchase a number of them, and make them available for purchase by women's groups. The women in the groups can share them and, if deemed useful enough, they can purchase more through small loans. PERFORM can assist the groups in accessing the product as well as possibly buying in bulk to lower the cost.

### *Domestic rain-water harvesting, prioritizing women heads of household*

Domestic rain-water harvesting would also reduce the time burden of collecting water. As with cook stoves, PERFORM could introduce such harvesting to women's groups first and build their capacity to construct, operate, maintain and finance the systems. An example can be found here: <https://rwsnforum.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/126-putting-women-at-the-forefront-in-accelerating-self-supply-through-domestic-rain-water-harvesting.pdf>.

### ***Solar Sisters, prioritizing women heads of household***

Solar Sisters provide economic opportunity for women by supporting them as entrepreneurs through direct sales of clean energy to their communities in the form of solar-powered lamps and other solar products. Citing Deloitte University, the website explains: “Energy access programs that are coupled with meaningful income-generating activities can play a critical role on both fronts. Analysis of country-level data shows that the greater the proportion of a country’s population that has access to electricity, the greater its gender equality—regardless of the proportion of its population living under \$1.25 a day.” <http://www.solarsister.org>.

### ***Childcare cooperatives, prioritizing women heads of household***

When children are no longer bound to their mothers backs, but also not yet in school, women must allocate greater time and attention to childcare. To address this, mothers can pool their labor to care for a few neighbor children at a time, ideally, at a local church or mosque.

The international NGO World Relief has created such a program with strong support from the GOM. The team was unable to meet with World Relief during the field assessment but more information should be gathered to learn if: (1) World Relief cooperatives are operating in the PERFORM geographies; and (2) PERFORM participants can also participate in those cooperatives; and/or (3) is it possible to facilitate the organization of such cooperatives.

## **5.3 PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 2**

This section first supplements the Objective 2 language from the PERFORM work plan, inserted here as “track changes.” In some cases the revisions just call out gender issues to be considered. In other cases, additional activities are added under a result. This section concludes with additional, stand-alone programmatic recommendations.

### **Objective 2: low-emissions land use opportunities are increased in targeted geographies**

- Result 2.1: decentralized land and forest management improved in targeted geographies.
  - Capacity assessment of stakeholders, including gender differentiation, best practices at the level of community and district for LEDS implementation.
  - Promotion and formation of LFOs, ADCs, VDCs, paying particular attention to gender equality in leadership and membership; provide leadership and public speaking training to elected leaders, at a minimum.
  - Capacity building to develop forest management plans, targeting both men and women.
  - Study tour, including equal gender representation of delegates, as well as gender considerations on study curriculum.
- Result 2.2: livelihood opportunities from conservation expanded.
  - Identification and assessment of livelihood opportunities; value chain assessment. Both assessments need to examine the gender differences in livelihoods as well as roles in various value chains.
  - Lead farmer program; although lead farmers are elected by community, and require an abundance of land near roads (often excluding the poorest), consider modification of the program that would allow owners with smaller landholdings to serve as a lead farmer, such as women heads of household.
- Result 2.3: increased forest cover in targeted geographies.
  - Trainings in landscape and forest management, targeting men and women equally, as well as women heads of household. Conduct same-sex trainings until the team confirms that women

- are comfortable actively engaging and speaking in public. Use visual tools in trainings to accommodate women's lower literacy levels. Provide child care during trainings.
- Trainings on construction of improved cook stoves, prioritizing women heads of household.
- Will develop intervention package to address demand for biomass for household consumption and for use in production of cash crops.
- Communications and IEC materials including BCC regarding GBV and female empowerment. Integrate visual tools such as videos and demonstrations to reach women who are less literate. Disseminate information and materials at locations convenient for women such as schools and health centers or at meetings where women are known to come.
- Result 2.4: improved forestry extension services and research capabilities.
  - Strategy for research mentorship program, including scholarships and other incentives to ensure equal gender representation.
  - Training extension agents in the measurement protocols for estimating carbon stocks in forestland.
  - Pilot a program, including gender-sensitivity training, for forest managers attached to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife to re-train in Community-Based Natural Resource Management.
- Result 2.5: lessons learned, including gendered lessons, effectively communicated to a wide variety of stakeholders in a way that constructively informs the national REDD+ process.
  - Documentation of lessons learned that can be shared in subsequent years.
  - Ensure that stakeholder list for dissemination includes women's rights advocates and NGOs.
  - If women's NGOs are not focused on REDD+ readiness, convene series of meetings raising awareness about REDD+ gender implications and support establishment of women's national task force to engage on REDD+ readiness dialogue.
- Result 2.6: measurable net GHG emission reductions achieved in targeted landscapes.
  - Estimate ex ante GHG emissions reductions for the project will be estimated using carbon calculator.

In addition to the above recommendations, the following activities are recommended to promote gender equality and female empowerment, consistent with USAID policy. Note that these recommendations are listed in order of priority.

- Ensure equal representation and participation of men and women in Objective 2 activities.
- Map existing formal and informal women's and men's organizations at the local level, including but not limited to farmer associations and VSL associations.
- To help encourage women to seek positions of leadership, replace the term, "village headman," with "village head" and "chairman" with "chair."
- Link PERFORM participants with adult literacy and numeracy programs implemented by other NGOs, prioritizing women heads of household.
- Design and implement a PERFORM-LUANAR forestry mentor program, in which LUANAR faculty (both male and female) are paired with: (1) secondary school students (both male and female), such a LUANAR program is already underway, operating in other districts.; and (2) LFMBs. Also facilitate participants (faculty and students) to speak with communities about their experiences – a form of a "speaker's bureau" to provide inspiration and decrease isolation.

- Design and implement public IEC on constitutional rights and guarantees regarding non-discrimination based on sex, freedom of expression, and right to education, etc. Before drafting content for such a campaign, canvass all government and NGOs that work on gender discrimination to determine if materials have already been created. Note that there is already a guide for teaching primary and secondary school students about the Gender Equality Act: <http://www.open.ac.uk/scotland/sites/www.open.ac.uk.scotland/files/files/ecms/web-content/Gender%20Equality%20Act%20Resource%20%28web%20version%29.pdf>.
- Support formation, governance, and sustainability of women's, men's, and mixed-gender CBOs and VSL. Monitor for which groups are the most successful in each site.
- Design and deliver leadership, advocacy, public speaking, and gender-sensitivity trainings to community governance, VSL, and CBO leaders who share their learning through an agreed-upon number of peer sessions.
- Create and facilitate same-sex safe spaces to discuss gender-related concerns and impacts on family and community; may also be used as a tool for monitoring gender sensitivity, GBV, and allocation of household decision making.
- Design and implement a climate change/legal education school program, expressed through the arts, working with unemployed youth.

Finally, if and when PERFORM engages in any policy or legal analysis, such analyses need to include a gender-specific review.

# 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PMEP

Per the SOW, this section provides recommendations for amending PERFORM's life-of-project PMEP, which includes standards and guidelines for monitoring, evaluating, and communicating progress towards achievement of specific results and objectives. The PMEP will be updated annually to address evolving needs.

## *Existing PMEP indicators*

Within the PMEP, the Performance Indicator Table provides a benchmark for program management and reporting. It currently contains the following three indicators for Objective 2:

- 2.1 Number of hectares (disaggregated by pilot sites) of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved NRM practices
- 2.2 Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance
- 2.3 Quantity of GHG emissions, measured in metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance

(PERFORM 2014) Of these indicators, Indicator 2.2 is the only unit of measure associated with people, to be disaggregated by sex.

**2.2 Recommended revision:** Given the economic and social marginalization of women heads of household, who rely more on forests for their livelihoods than households headed by males, Section 6 of this report recommends a specific focus on this group. To monitor that focus, further disaggregate by the sex of the head of household in which the counted person resides: (1) headed by a male; or (2) headed by a female, as widows, divorcees, or abandoned women with children.

**2.2 Recommended revision:** The year one target for Indicator 2.2 is 1,500 farmers. As previously noted, women-headed households make up 24% of Malawi's population overall, and 26.8% of the population in Ntchisi District (NORAD 2009). Data for Mzimba could not be located. Based on this data, set the target for this indicator at no more than 1,125 male-headed households and at least 375 women-headed households.

Indicator 2.1 measures the "number of hectares (disaggregated by pilot sites) of natural resources under improved NRM practices," targeting 47,000 hectares in year one. As currently measured, the indicator does not capture the identity of the person/institution in control of those lands.

**2.1 Recommended revision:** Assuming that this indicator measures land holdings controlled by individual households, as well as in government forest reserves, disaggregate the data by sex and gender of household head managing the land (male or female).

## *Monitoring gender-based violence*

As mentioned above, GBV is a significant development challenge in Malawi. And as incomes rise and/or as women become more empowered, it is possible for incidents of GBV to also increase in the short term.

Given the rule “Do No Harm,” PERFORM needs to monitor the incidence of GBV within its impact area. This indicator is recommended for inclusion in the indicator table:

**2.4 Recommended indicator:** “Number of cases of GBV reported by men and women,” including age and whether living in a male or female-headed household.

Based on the field interviews, it appears that there is a network of institutions, with which PERFORM can connect to obtain the necessary data on GBV. The exact language of this indicator may need to be revised to capture exactly the data that the VSUs are tracking.

### ***Monitoring men’s and women’s leadership opportunities***

The analysis of findings reflects few women in leadership positions in the forest sector and other community structures. To ensure the project does not perpetuate the official stated status quo of men making all of the decisions and women doing all the work, the following additional indicator is recommended:

**2.5 Recommended indicator:** “Number of people serving in leadership positions in community governance structures, particularly regarding natural resources management, or other organizations such as community based organizations, etc. as well as number of members of these organizations,” disaggregated by sex and gender of household head.

### ***Additional recommendations for evaluation***

The above indicators are intended to measure the extent to which both men and women, including women heads of household, participate in and benefit from project activities. These next recommended indicators are to measure progress towards achievement of gender equality and female empowerment and depend on additional programming. They are to be used in the context of baseline household surveys (or other quantitative surveys) that will be conducted at the beginning of the project and the end line surveys. They are sourced from the following USAID guidance: *ADS Chapter 205 Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID’s Program Cycle* (2013).

**Recommendation:** “Proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities.” This indicator assumes that there is some programming on gender equality and sensitivity as well as communications messaging regarding constitutional guarantees of non-discrimination based on sex, gender equality, freedom of expression, etc.

**Recommendation:** “Percentage of target population that views GBV as less acceptable after participating in or being exposed to USG programming.” This indicator assumes that there is some programming on gender equality and sensitivity as well as communications messaging regarding constitutional guarantees of non-discrimination based on sex, gender equality, freedom of expression, etc.

**Recommendation:** “Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG-supported training/programming.” Self-efficacy refers to a person’s beliefs in his or her capacity to produce actions that are necessary for achieving desired outcomes/attainments. It is similar to having a sense of personal agency. This indicator assumes that there is some programming focused on building women’s leadership and public speaking skills.

Note that a Gender Specialist ought to be a core part of survey teams to provide gender-specific input on survey tools as well as techniques. For example, a Gender Specialist will ensure the survey includes married women who are not heads of household. Such interviews that ask questions about power dynamics, trying to understand whether husbands are exerting greater control over household assets (or an increase in GBV) as incomes rise, need to be conducted by female enumerators in confidence. Care must

be taken; otherwise, in some communities, women participating in such a survey may increase their exposure to acts of violence.

In sum,

- Collect and analyze gender disaggregated data and social indicators that measure changes in status and levels of inequality.
- In addition to disaggregation by sex, add disaggregation by sex of head of household; i.e. set target for and monitor participation of women-headed households in all activities.
- To help encourage women to seek positions of leadership, replace the term, “village headman,” with “village head” and “chairman” with “chair.”
- Set targets on women’s leadership and evaluate women’s perception of increased self-efficacy.
- Monitor incidents of GBV.
- Evaluate assertion of greater control in the household by men as incomes rise and female empowerment is supported.
- Evaluate reporting of increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities.
- Evaluate changes in views on GBV as less acceptable after participating in or being exposed to USG programming.



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# APPENDIX A – STATEMENT OF WORK

## ACTIVITY STATEMENT OF WORK Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) USAID/Malawi Contract # AI D-OAA-I-13-000S8/AIDG12-TO-14-00003

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**Title:** Gender Plan, including Assessment—PERFORM Project

**Component:** Cross-Cutting

**Consultants:** TBD

**Duration:** Approx. November 24, 2014 – March 27, 2015

**LOE:** Total Level of Effort (LoE) = 48 days, broken out as follows:  
Specialist 1: 28 days  
Specialist 2: 20 days

**Supervisor:** Ramzy Kanaan, Chief of Party

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### Background

Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) is a five-year project funded by USAID/Malawi and implemented by Tetra Tech ARD.<sup>8</sup> The objectives of the project are:

1. REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) readiness is advanced
2. Low-emissions land use opportunities are increased in targeted geographies
3. Low-emissions development capacities are improved
4. Pathways for sustainability are instituted
5. CDCS (Country Development and Cooperation Strategy) priorities of integration and institutional strengthening are advanced

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<sup>8</sup>Key partners include Total LandCare (TLC), Winrock International (Winrock), Michigan State University (MSU), World Resources Institute (WRI), and the Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA).

It is the project's premise that if these objectives are achieved, so too will be the project's goal of helping Malawian institutions and communities manage forest and soil resources more efficiently, equitably and sustainably.

PERFORM is a core component of environment programming under USAID's Development Objective Assistance Agreement with the Government of Malawi (GoM), and is the flagship implementation vehicle for the low-emissions partnership between the U.S. and the GoM. PERFORM was designed to align with Malawi's mid-term Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and to promote the more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of Malawian forests and soils.

The services that Miombo woodlands provide to Malawians are numerous—including food, water, and fuel. However, these woodlands' size is decreasing at one of the highest rates in southern Africa due to Malawi's unsustainable use of fuel wood and charcoal, poor agricultural practices, limited economic choices, and high population growth. PERFORM, and engagement in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) present opportunities to tackle these interrelated issues. REDD+ offers a holistic framework for supporting sustainable land management by integrating policy and resource governance in the rural landscape with the development of analytical capacities, consultative processes, and economic incentives. PERFORM takes a landscape approach to REDD+ within a low-emission development strategy (LEDS) that embeds rural land use planning within Malawi's development priorities.

PERFORM proposes to work with Malawian government and civil society, at the national-, district- and local-level, to improve knowledge, systems and policy for forest management and greenhouse gas accounting. It will also work with communities to promote sustainable land use, including land use intensification, tree and forest management, and improved governance. Participatory methods, promotion of innovation and learning, and a focus on the people of Malawi will ensure that PERFORM achieves its ambitious goals.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Activity Statement of Work (SOW) are three-fold, to:

1. assess gender aspects relevant to the PERFORM Project,
2. develop a comprehensive plan (PERFORM Gender Plan) for addressing gender issues through project implementation, based on the assessment, and to
3. help integrate the PERFORM Gender Plan in the project's first year work plan and life of project PMEP.

## **Tasks**

The assignment will be undertaken in two phases:

### Phase One—Desktop research/literature review:

In Phase One the Consultants will undertake desk research to begin documenting the gender dynamics in relevant fields/areas in Malawi (e.g. land tenure and property right; agriculture/forestry/landuse; labor roles, responsibilities and distributions; exposure to energy-related hazards such as indoor air pollution...). Specific tasks include:

- I. The Consultants will collect and review:

- a. USG/USAID policies/guidance/strategies on gender,
  - b. Project information and deliverables (including Section C of the RFP, Tetra Tech ARD's Technical Proposal, the draft first year work plan, and the draft life of project PMEP),
  - c. Gender resources from Malawi (and possibly the region), and
  - d. Sector-specific gender resources on forestry/REDD+, agriculture and Low Emissions Development Strategies (LEDS).
2. The Consultants will prepare a draft assessment that summarizes and synthesizes the above literature, applying USAID's *Six Domains of Gender Analysis*.

#### Phase Two—Verify findings and develop the PERFORM Gender Plan:

The Consultants will:

- a. With project staff, visit project sites to verify/groundtruth initial findings;
- b. Develop a Gender Plan that clearly articulates how PERFORM can most effectively address the gender issues identified through the project's three technical components;
- c. Review the project's first year work plan and the life of project PMEP and develop recommendations to better and more explicitly address, monitor and report on development challenges;
- d. Present the draft Gender Plan and work plan/PMEP recommendations to the PERFORM Team; and,
- e. Revise and finalize the Gender Plan

### **Outputs**

The expected outputs from this assignment include the following:

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|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Deliverable 1.</b> | A detailed draft <b>work plan/schedule</b> , submitted three days after the start of the consultancy.                        |
| <b>Deliverable 2.</b> | A draft <b>outline</b> for the Gender Plan, including the assessment, submitted one week after the start of the consultancy. |
| <b>Deliverable 3.</b> | A draft <b>Gender Plan</b> , due within one week of consultant's departure from Malawi.                                      |
| <b>Deliverable 4.</b> | Draft recommendations for integrating gender into the work plan/PMEP.  |
| <b>Deliverable 5.</b> | A final Gender Plan, due within one week of receipt of comments from Tetra Tech ARD.   |

### **Personnel & Level of Effort**

The PERFORM Project proposes to twin an international gender specialist with expertise in land tenure and property rights, and a Malawian gender specialist with expertise in the forestry/landuse sectors.

To adequately perform this assignment, a total level-of-effort of forty-four (44) days is proposed, divided as follows:

#### Phase One:

- International gender specialist = 10 days
- Malawian gender specialist = 5 days

#### Phase Two:

- International gender specialist = 18 days
- Malawian gender specialist = 15 days

This Activity Statement of Work will begin on/around November 24, 2014 and will be completed by March 27, 2014.

#### **Roles**

The international gender specialist will serve as the Team Leader, and in this capacity will be responsible for coordinating the assignment and submitting the deliverables.

### **ANNEX I: RELEVANT EXCERPTS FROM THE PERFORM PROJECT CONTRACT**

#### C.7.6 Incorporating Gender in PERFORM Implementation

USAID policy requires that gender issues be addressed as appropriate and constructive in all USAID-funded activities. In Malawi, gender has a very large influence on key aspects on REDD+ and biodiversity conservation such as land tenure, labor roles and distributions, and exposure to energy-related hazards such as indoor air pollution. Within the first three months of project implementation, the Contractor must assess all relevant gender aspects of PERFORM and complete a comprehensive plan for addressing gender issues through the program.

Throughout the life of the project PERFORM will assess and appropriately address gender dimensions of the project. In this regard the Contractor must:

- Complete periodic assessments of any changes in the context for PERFORM's gender objectives and progress against these objectives.
- Promote forest and biodiversity conservation measures that reduce gender inequities.
- Collect gender-disaggregated data and monitor gender impacts at all project stages.

#### C.7.9 General Management Approach

Consider gender, culture, and equity. The Contractor must use gender (see also C.7.6 above) and cultural assessments of program plans and impacts as a management tool for achieving and reporting on results disaggregated by gender and to better and more explicitly address development challenges. All work must consider the rights and needs of local people, especially historically marginalized sectors of society.



# APPENDIX B – FIELD SCHEDULE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
15	16  Afternoon Team mtg	17  Lilongwe mtgs; prep for Ntchisi	18  <i>Travel to Ntchisi – FGDs</i>	19  Ntchisi – KIIs & FGDs	20  Ntchisi – FGDs  <i>Return to Lilongwe</i>	21  Prep for Mzimba
22  Rest  <i>Travel to Mzimba</i>	23  Mzimba – KIIs	24  Mzimba – FGDs	25  Mzimba – FGDs  <i>Return to Lilongwe</i>	26  Lilongwe mtgs; prepare findings	27  Team presentation of prelim. findings / recs	28

## KIIs in Lilongwe:

- Stella Gama, Assistant Director of Forestry, Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining
- Roselyn Makhumula, Director of Administration, Department of Gender Affairs, Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
- Benjamin Lentz, Chief of Party & Robert Chizimba, Deputy Chief of Party, USAID/Malwai, Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains

# APPENDIX C – EXCERPT ON GBV, *REVISED* *NATIONAL GENDER* *POLICY*

## **3.8 POLICY THEME 8: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE**

### **3.8.1 Gender-based violence eliminated through laws, policies and socio-economic services.**

#### **3.8.2. Objective 1 – To enhance formulation and enforcement of laws and policies related to gender based violence.**

##### ***Strategies***

3.8.2.1 Orient law enforcers, Traditional leaders, religious leaders, political leaders and the public on the new laws and policies on gender based violence;

3.8.2.2 Advocate for the review and enforcement of the penal codes to criminalize emerging issues such as sexual abuse in marriages;

3.8.2.3 Advocate for comprehensive implementation and monitoring of policies, procedures and protocols of GBV;

3.8.2.4 Advocate for the development of institutional gender policies, sexual harassment policies and laws that include clear reporting mechanisms and sanctions for educators and other staff who violate such policies;

3.8.2.5 Create awareness on laws that protect women's rights; and

3.8.2.6 Advocate for increased resource allocation in response to gender-based violence.

#### **3.8.3 Objective 2 – To improve the response and access to socioeconomic services to address Gender-based violence.**

##### ***Strategies***

3.8.3.1 Lobby for the strengthening of victim Support Units and female cells;

3.8.3.2 Create a conducive environment for reporting of gender-based violence cases at all institutions including the police;

3.8.3.3 Advocate for the provision of legal aid and alternative dispute resolution services to victims of gender-based violence;

3.8.3.4 Advocate for mainstreaming of gender-based violence in HIV and AIDS and other reproductive health programs;

3.8.3.5 Advocate for the provision of counseling services to victims of gender-based violence at all levels (community, educational institutions, workplace and public places);

3.8.3.6 Strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration, networks and alliances particularly between and among legal, social and health organizations;

3.8.3.7 Revise laws and policies to improve women's rights to property, land, inheritance, and labour force participation; and

3.8.3.8 Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for the existing laws that punish perpetrators of gender-based violence specially service providers.

**3.8.4 Objective 3 – To improve knowledge, attitudes and practices on gender-based violence issues.**

***Strategies***

3.8.4.1 Lobby organizations and institutions to mainstream gender in their programmes and activities; and

3.8.4.2 Collaborate with the media on development of guidelines for media reporting on gender-based violence issues which ensure sensitive coverage.

**3.8.5 Objective 4 – To eliminate all forms of human trafficking especially women and children.**

***Strategies***

3.8.5.1 Advocate for the enactment of law on the elimination of human trafficking;

3.8.5.2 Create public awareness on human trafficking;

3.8.5.3 Strengthen the efforts of stakeholders in the fight against human trafficking; and

3.8.5.4 Advocate for provision of rehabilitation services to survivors of human trafficking.

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