

Claire Lauterbach*
& Isabel Matenje
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Gender, IFIs and Food Insecurity

Case Study: Malawi



The agriculture sector is the backbone of Malawi's economy. Agriculture generates over a third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and 90 percent of its export revenues (CIA 2012). While tobacco, sugar, coffee and tea are Malawi's primary cash crops, corn is the primary staple of domestic consumption. Over 86 percent of Malawi's population lives in rural areas and depends on subsistence agriculture to meet its food needs.

Smallholder farmers are highly vulnerable to food insecurity for economic and ecological reasons. A weak credit and extension service in the wake of the HIV/AIDS crisis has made it difficult for smallholder farmers to keep financially afloat. Farmers' strong dependence on rain-fed farming systems, coupled with chronic droughts,** has led to diminishing profits from low crop yields. These postharvest losses and lack of access to credit and extension*** have made it increasingly difficult for Malawi's smallholder farms to stay financially viable, with devastating consequences for food security. More than 40 percent of Malawi's smallholder farms cultivate fewer than 0.5 hectares on average, much of which is over-cultivated and under corn production (WFP 2010).

Women in particular have borne the brunt of Malawi's precarious food insecurity. Seventy percent of Malawi's agricultural labor force are women; they produce 70 percent of household food and perform between 50-70 percent of all agricultural tasks (GoM 2004). However, women continue to have poor access to and control over the means of agricultural production, including agricultural inputs, improved technologies, extension services, credit and land.

Malawi's food insecurity and generally poor agricultural marketing and extension services result in part from years of International Financial Institution (IFI)-sponsored policies prioritizing production of export crops over domestic food supply. As continued lenders and grant-makers to Malawi's agriculture sectors the World Bank (WB) and African Development Bank (AfDB) must ensure that agricultural investments benefit poor Malawians, particularly women.

IFIs and Malawi's agricultural sector

In the late 1960s, the WB supported area-based, integrated rural development projects in Malawi. In the mid-1970s, under the umbrella of the National Rural Development Program, the WB placed greater emphasis on agricultural extension to increase smallholder farm production.

Following a balance of payments crisis in the late 1970s, the WB made a series of structural adjustment credits to Malawi's government. The WB required, among conditions to receiving the credits, that Malawi's government curb domestic production tariffs, restrict real wage increases and privatize marketing parastatals to improve their efficiency (WB 1983; Gender Action 2006: 7), which it did throughout the 1980s. By the mid-1980s the Bank moved toward funding sectoral operations in extension, agricultural research, and smallholder credit. But the WB's approach had the effect of reducing the value of smallholder output and real wages, impoverishing smallholder farmers.

The WB and other donors including the AfDB greatly emphasized yield increases as the basis for agricultural intensification, particularly of corn production. This emphasis led to more than 70 percent of the land under smallholder cultivation

* Claire Lauterbach is Programs Associate at Gender Action; Isabel Matenje is former Principal Agricultural Officer, Malawi Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and former Director for Gender Affairs, Malawi Ministry of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services.

**The International Food Policy Research Institute estimates that Malawi loses an average of 1.7 percent of its GDP (around US\$ 22m in 2005 prices) yearly due to droughts and floods. Smaller-scale farmers and those in the flood-prone southern Malawi are worst affected (Pauw, Thurlow and Seventer 2010).

***Agricultural extension services in Malawi are weak due to several factors including low numbers of male and female trained extension workers causing unbalanced worker-to-farmer ratios; inadequate resources for incentives and operational funds; limited mobility due to poor transportation systems; and the HIV/AIDS epidemic that has reduced Malawi's workforce (Masangano and Mthinda 2012).

being planted with corn. Smallholder response was understandably tepid to this policy, given the limited income-generating potential of producing corn almost exclusively. By the late 1980s, the nutritional deficiencies of Malawi's population became more apparent. The WB, AfDB and other donors lent their funding weight and technical advice to the government's new agricultural strategy, which saw the lifting of restrictions on smallholder tobacco production and trade. Eventually this led to a significant shift away from corn towards tobacco and food crops like roots and legumes that would address the population's food insecurity by decreasing reliance on water-intensive corn production.

In recent years, Malawi's economy has continued to be vulnerable to various exogenous shocks but the government has shown strong willingness to buck IFI pressure in the interests of the nation's food security (NYT 2007). For instance, a severe drought in 2005 caused corn production to decline by about 25 percent. Declaring a state of emergency, Malawi's government introduced the Farm Input Subsidy Program (FISP) in fiscal year (FY) 2005-2006 against fierce IFI resistance. As a result since 2005 Malawi has been able to produce a corn surplus above its annual food requirements estimated at 2.8 metric tons (Chinsinga 2012).*

Malawi's government's Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) recognize the need for mainstreaming gender in all agricultural policies, processes, structures and programs ensuring that gender analyses are conducted in all project planning (GoM 2011). But have the IFIs, who are still significant financiers of the agriculture sector, followed suit by making gender-sensitive investments?

Gender Analysis Methodology and Findings

This case study applies 'Gender Action's Essential Gender Checklist'** to assess the extent to which the WB and AfDB fulfill their commitment to address gender issues and promote gender equality in agricultural investments in Malawi. We assess the two WB and three AfDB agriculture investments*** in Malawi that are active at time of writing (February 2013). The case study shows that while all five IFI investments do not approach food security from a human/women's rights perspective, all projects acknowledge women's roles in agriculture and gender inequalities.



Woman preparing moringa leaves (Jombo, Malawi) 2011 © Racine Tucker-Hamilton/Bread for the World

However, two projects do not contain the necessary sex-disaggregated data by which to measure their gender targets, and of the other three, one project's sex-disaggregated data is limited to the number of female beneficiaries. While all projects aim to enroll women (setting targets at or above 30 percent female participation), the projects largely address gender inequality through "gender trainings" or "mainstreaming" but do not include specific project components that would address the roots of gender inequality in the agriculture sector. Recommendations for increasing the IFI agriculture investments' gender sensitivity are included.

*The government of President Joyce Banda, which came into power in 2012, has pledged to continue with the pro-poor farm input subsidy which is now in its eighth year while expanding the number of beneficiaries. As such in 2012/13 seasons the FISP will provide subsidized fertilizers, improved seed and legume seed to 1.5 million farmers, as compared to 1.4 million households in 2011/12. Banda also pledged to explore the possibility of expanding access to farm inputs by introducing credit facilities for farm inputs to resource poor farmers and improve on program efficiency and effectiveness (GoM 2012).

**The checklist is part of Gender Action's [Gender Toolkit for International Finance Watchers](#), a user-friendly toolkit for helping civil society groups to incorporate gender perspectives into their work on IFIs and other projects.

***The five include: all AfDB active projects in Malawi listed under "Agriculture & Agro-industries" (www.afdb.org/en/projects-and-operations/project-portfolio/) and all WB active projects in Malawi whose theme and sector makeup is listed as 50 % or more agriculture and/or rural development (www.worldbank.org/projects).

AfDB's "Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project", 2006-2014 (US\$15 m grant)

In May 2006, the AfDB approved a US\$ 15m grant to Malawi's Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to implement the "Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project". Citing Malawi's "unreliable rainfall, combined with extended dry spells that adversely affect crop productivity", the project aims to "increase the productivity and incomes of rural households in the project areas through the intensification and diversification of current cropping and improvement of the marketing system" (AfDB 2006a). The project has three components: irrigation development, a farmers' support program, and project management and coordination.

The project has ambitious gender goals: the AfDB estimates that the project will "contribute significantly to... halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015, and promoting gender equality and empowerment of women through their involvement in project activities" (AfDB 2006b: vii). But does this claim hold up?

The project justification includes limited discussion of gender inequalities, for example, noting lower incomes for women nationwide (AfDB 2006b: 5) and higher poverty rates among female-headed households. It notes a fact that is rarely recognized among IFI projects, that women's unpaid care work burden decreases the amount of time that they can spend in income-generating activities. In this sense, the project's professed understanding of gender issues in Malawi's agriculture sector is substantial.

Moving on to assess project activities, the outlook is less optimistic. The project relies heavily on "gender mainstreaming at both district and community levels" for water users associations (WUAs) (AfDB 2006b: 25) to achieve gender goals rather on concrete initiatives to promote women's participation. The project does contain clear gender targets for project components. Of the 300 of the 600 farmers it aims to train in water management were to be women (vi) as were 175 of the 300 farmers to be trained in crop production and pest control.

However, it is unclear if the project has any mechanism to ensure that this is in fact the case, beyond merely "emphasis[ing] that both men and women should be able to become members of the WUAs" (AfDB 2006b: 23). The project's monitoring and evaluation framework does not clarify whether integration of gender concerns was thorough. Though a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and Project Coordinator are supposed to "ensure active involvement of women" (43), none of the project indicators are sex-disaggregated, though they could be: for example, key indicators include "Average income within the participating smallholder farmer groups", "Number of persons trained" and "Negotiation ability of farmers or their organization" (viii-x).

Despite the absence of sex-disaggregated indicators, it is clear that the project demonstrates an understanding of gender concerns and has appropriate gender targets for women's inclusion in the project. However, just like in many of the projects analyzed in this case study, the AfDB neither approaches gender equality as a human right nor assesses whether its gender-related goals are met.

UNICEF: Malawi socio-Economic Indicators (2010)

Population (millions)	14.9
Life expectancy at birth for ages 15-59 (years)	54
% of population living below \$1.25 per day (2000-2009)	74
% of population that consumes iodized salt (2000-2009)	50
% Of children <5 years who are underweight (rural)	13
% Of children <5 years who are underweight (urban)	10
% children < 5 years who are stunted (moderate/severe)	47
% children < 5 years who are wasting (moderate/severe)	4
% of population using improved drinking water sources (2008)	80
% estimated adult (aged 15-49) HIV prevalence	11
Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births (2008, adjusted)	510

Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

Women's/Human Rights: The project does not approach gender in agriculture and food security as a human or women's rights issue.

Gender In/equality: Gender inequalities such as women's lower income earnings and high poverty rates among female-headed households are discussed throughout project justification (AfDB 2006: 5). The project aims to "Reduce HIV/AIDS impact and gender disparities in the agricultural sector" (7).

Gender Data: No sex-disaggregated data are included in project assessments, though women participation targets are discussed.

Gender in Context: Project documentation discusses women in Malawi's agriculture in project design.

Gender Access: Clear targets are set for women's representation, for example, in water users' associations (WUAs): "Women will be involved in the participatory irrigation scheme management as members of WUAs and will constitute half the elected representatives of WUGs [water user groups, which are larger and informal] as well as half of the contact farmers trained by the project" (AfDB 2006b: 43).

Gender Input: Women are expected to participate in project implementation as beneficiaries and in governance structures of the irrigation schemes but it is unclear if this was implemented.

Gender Output: The project does not plan project outputs and outcomes that accommodate and respond to the differential needs of men and women, boys and girls. It relies instead on promoting women's participation in existing project activities.

Gender Impact: Despite optimism that the project will "contribute significantly to... promoting gender equality and empowerment of women" (AfDB 2006b: vii), the project lacks sex-disaggregated indicators, therefore it is not possible to measure gender impacts.

The WB's "Agricultural Development Programme Support Project (ADP-SP)", 2008-2015 (US\$ 32m loan)

In June 2008, the WB approved a loan amounting to US\$ 32 million to Malawi's government to support the "Agriculture Development Program Support Project (ADP-SP)". The project, which runs through 2015, aims to "improve the effectiveness of investments aimed at food security and sustainable agricultural growth [and]... strengthen the natural resource base in agricultural lands" (WB 2008: 2). The project has two operational components: Institutional Development and Capacity Building in Preparation of a SWAp [Sector-wide approach] in Agriculture; and Sustainable Food Security, which involves "technology transfer" to smallholder farms to improve yields and "Strengthening market based agricultural risk management strategies" (4).

The Project Appraisal Document (from May 2008, before the project was even approved) states that "Special efforts will be made to encourage equitable targeting of technology transfer support and training to women farmers, female-headed households and those affected by HIV/AIDS" (WB 2008b: 14). According to the Project Information Document, the WB conducted a safeguards review that would "assess possible gender constraints to access to project related services and identify ways to assure women, and female-headed households, in particular, can benefit from project commitments" (WB 2007).

Have the results of this assessment informed the project? Seeking to "operationalize the MoAFS [Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security]'s HIV/AIDS and gender mainstreaming policy and strategy" (WB 2008b: 3), the project involves hiring a consultant on gender (WB 2008b: 12). However, activities that explicitly addresses gender inequalities seem limited to "gender/HIV awareness training" for lead farmers (2008b: 14) and for Agriculture Ministry staff (2008b: 31), and enrolling women in existing project components.

The project's monitoring and evaluation framework inadequately measures the project's performance against its lofty gender goal of "at least 50% participation by women" in all project components (WB 2012a: 30). However, the latest Implementation Status and Results Report contains only one, albeit important, sex-disaggregated indicator, the number of female beneficiaries (WB 2012a: 4). It is not clear how the number of beneficiaries is tallied, so it is difficult to assess if this indicator measures the project's impact on women.



Woman dries corn flour (Balaka, Malawi) 2012 © T. Samson/CIMMYT

Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

Women's/Human Rights: The project does not approach gender in agriculture and food security as a human or women's rights issue.

Gender In/equality: There is limited discussion of gender inequalities in project justification objectives to promote women's equality throughout the project.

Gender Data: Despite commitment to including women, the project's monitoring and evaluation framework contains only one sex-disaggregated indicator, the number of female beneficiaries (WB 2012b: 4).

Gender in Context: Project documentation makes some mention of gender issues such as higher rates of poverty among female-headed households (WB 2008b: 34), and in HIV/AIDS infection rates (40). Also anticipates potential negative impacts on women of the increased work burden due to increased crop rotation "given the gender division of labour" (WB 2008b: 123).

Gender Access: Women are expected to make up 50 percent of the 7,500 "lead farmers" trained under the project in "gender/HIV awareness, and farmer-led experimentation, technology access and adaptation" and vulnerable "vulnerable female-headed or HIV/AIDS affected households" are expected to make up 30 percent of the farmers targeted for these programs (2008b: 14).

Gender Input: Does not state the levels of women's and men's participation at all stages of project cycle including governance structures.

Gender Output: In the latest Implementation Status and Results Report, only one indicator is sex-disaggregated (WB 2012a), despite promising that all project activities be designed to have 50 percent women participants (2008b: 30).

Gender Impact: The project's lack of gender-sensitive indicators (apart from percentage of female beneficiaries) (WB 2012a) makes gender impacts impossible to determine, despite promises of positive impacts for women (WB 2008b: 28).

The AfDB's "Agriculture Infrastructure Support Project (AISP) Project", 2010-2015 (US\$ 26.3m grant)

In September 2009, the AfDB approved the five-year US\$ 23.6 million "Agricultural Infrastructure Support Project (AISP)" in Malawi.

The project aims to "enhance agricultural productivity and strengthen Malawi's overall food security through increased irrigation and efficient agricultural water management in the three Agricultural Development Divisions of Salima, Blantyre and Shire Valley, in four administrative districts (Nkhosakota, Neno, Chikwawa and Nsanje), in the Green Belt Zone" (AfDB 2009a). The project aims to benefit 10,000 household commercial agriculture farmers through a mix of "infrastructure development, capacity building, as well as project management and coordination" (AfDB 2009a), within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The project has provided some limited analysis of gender issues by commissioning "as part of capacity building, [...] a Gender Analysis, which will be completed within 6 months of project implementation, whose results will be used for project implementation" (AfDB 2009b).

Have the results of this gender analysis made the project more gender-sensitive?

The project's description mentions "gross gender imbalance" (AfDB 2009b) in Malawi's agriculture sector as well as other gender issues. Project components demonstrate some limited commitment to gender equality. In the "capacity-building" component (one of four), the AfDB pledges that "at least 30% of the farmers will be women. A total of 45 (at least 15 women) members of staff from the three participating ADD [Agriculture Development Divisions, territorial administration units] will be trained in agronomy and irrigation management" (AfDB 2009b). However, none of the other three project components – infrastructure development; market infrastructure and linkages; and project management and coordination – ensure that women's concerns are addressed and represented. For example, the "infrastructure development" component could have included special activities or safeguards to ensure that activities like the "Construction of 13 modern market platforms with water and sanitation" are accessible to women (2009c: 3).

In its monitoring and evaluation framework, the project does set gendered targets. It aims for "3,350 Smallholder farmers (at least 30% women-headed)" (AfDB 2009c: v) to benefit from increased agricultural inputs. It also aims that "600 farm families (at least 30% women-headed)" benefit from infrastructure development, among other targets. However, the corresponding indicators to monitor and evaluate meeting these goals fail to disaggregate by sex.

In terms of project outcomes, the AfDB promises that "Female-headed households who comprise a significant percentage of households within the project area, and are more likely to be food insecure than other households, will benefit from the project activities" and that "Improved markets will also facilitate increased income opportunities for the poor, women, and other vulnerable groups" (AfDB 2009b). However, one cannot assume that these benefits will derive automatically from the project. As Gender Action has shown, this cannot be taken for granted. Given that the project's indicators appear to be largely gender-blind, assessing this claim is impossible.

Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

Women's/Human Rights: The project does not approach food security as a human or women's rights issue.

Gender In/equality: The project justification mentions limited gender inequalities inhibiting agricultural development. The project also expects that "Improved markets will also facilitate increased income opportunities for the poor, women, and other vulnerable groups, thereby creating growth and employment" (AfDB 2009b).

Gender Data: Sex-disaggregated targets are included in monitoring and evaluation framework, for example, the "target population" is the "local population in project areas (30 % women)" (AfDB 2009c: vi), but corresponding "performance indicators" are gender-blind.

Gender in Context: There is some mention of women's roles in agriculture in the project context and rationale.

Gender Access: One project component of three includes gender targets: to "Train 3,350 farmers and 45 GoM [Government of Malawi] staff (of whom at least 30% are women) on irrigated agriculture and use of solar energy for irrigation" (AfDB 2009c: 3).

Gender Input: Project documentation does not state the degree to which women were able to participate at all stages of project cycle, from project design through monitoring and evaluation. Women's participation is only mentioned in one of four components.

Gender Output: Project does not include components specifically addressing women's needs, instead relying on increased participation rates of women to accomplish gender goals.

Gender Impact: The project promises positive gender impacts, such as increased food security for female-headed households (AfDB 2009b), but lacks an adequate framework to assess the claim (see Gender Data).

The WB's "Irrigation, Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Development Project" (IRLADP), 2005-2014 (US\$ 90m; 75 % grant, 25% loan)

In November 2005, the WB approved the "Irrigation, Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Development Project (IRLADP)". The project's US\$ 40 million budget was provided as a grant. In July 2012, the WB approved additional financing for the project in the amount of US\$ 50 million, half in grant form and half as a credit (loan). The project aims to finance the cost overrun to invest in infrastructure and provide technical support for small scale irrigation to raise agricultural productivity and net incomes of almost 200,000 poor rural households in 11 target districts of Malawi; and strengthen institutional capacity for long-term irrigation development.

The original project's Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (WB 2005a) identifies women farmers as key participants in rural livelihoods and development, promising "positive impacts" for women (vi), which would last "for the entire operational phase" (42). Despite this recognition, the project does not adequately address women farmers' needs, despite women's disproportionately lower rates of access to agricultural credit and other benefits. The Impact Assessment contains no strategy to address gender inequalities: even its HIV/AIDS mitigation strategy consists only of "civic education before rehabilitation works starts" and "distribution of condoms to workers and local people during works", demonstrating a shocking lack of awareness of how women's social inequality perpetuates HIV/AIDS, which condoms and civic education alone can hardly address.

Although the project pledges that "relevant social issues such as gender and HIV/AIDS have also been incorporated into the project to ensure equity and avoid social exclusion" (WB 2010b: 22), there is neither evidence of this in any of the four project components, nor of women being consulted in project design. None of the available project documentation includes a detailed analysis of gender issues. Thus the gender-based targets (discussed below) in the Results Framework give the impression of being 'boxes to tick' rather than fully incorporated into project design and justification.

Positively, however, the project documentation does contain gender-based targets and corresponding sex-disaggregated monitoring and evaluation indicators. Among these are: the number of direct female project beneficiaries, percentage of female "Water users provided with new/improved irrigation and drainage services" and number of female "farmers directly benefiting from the Inputs for Assets Vouchers Program" and percentage of female "people trained on Extension Services" (WB 2013). While this attention to collecting sex-disaggregated data should be applauded, the percentages of female participation to which the last two indicators aim are rather low – around 40 percent – despite women constituting 70 percent of smallholder farmers (WB 2013).

Challenges to smallholder agricultural productivity and food security in Malawi

- Pervasive inequality in women's access to land and agricultural credit and inputs
- Weak extension services: only 15 percent of male and 8 percent of female farmers access agricultural extension services
- HIV/AIDS, with 11 percent adult prevalence rate
- Small and fragmented land-holding sizes, often less than one hectare
- Over dependence on rain-fed systems: 99 percent of all cultivable land is rain-fed
- Land degradation due to continuous cropping
- Limited access to financial services: only 12 percent smallholder farmers access credit
- Post-harvest losses at 40 percent due to drought and floods

Sources: UNDP Gender and Human Development Report (2010), Makombe, T., Lewin, P. and Fisher, M. (2011), AfDB (2009b)

Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

Women's/Human Rights: The project does not address irrigation and rural livelihoods as a women's and human rights issue.

Gender In/equality: Project documents (WB 2005a, b; 2010b) acknowledge gender inequalities thoroughly (see Gender in Context) but do not outline project components to address them.

Gender Data: The project contains thorough sex-disaggregated indicators (WB 2013; WB 2010a: 3).

Gender in Context: Project documents discuss gender issues, including women roles as agricultural producers (WB 2005a); pregnant women's vulnerability to pest control chemicals (WB 2012b) and women's underrepresentation in Scheme Management Committees (WB 2012c).

Gender Access: Women's equal ability to participate in the project is assumed; no specific provisions exist to promote women's involvement, the responsibility of which is given to the Water User Associations (WUAs) themselves (WB 2005b: 65-7).

Gender Input: The project aims to benefit women by setting 40 percent female participation targets for key indicators (WB 2013); there is no mention as to how these women will participate in other stages of the project cycle.

Gender Output: The project does not mention specific gender-related outcomes envisioned for the project. Project components do not include specific measures to address women's inequality.

Gender Impact: The project documentation does consider the differential longer-term impacts of projects and/or IFI-endorsed policies on women and men, boys and girls. These are assumed to be "positive": women "will have the opportunity to participate in farm related income generating activities and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the community and the country as a whole" (WB 2005a: vi).

The AfDB's "Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihood and Agriculture (CARLA) Project", 2011-2015 (US\$ 3m grant)

In October 2011, the AfDB approved a US\$3 million five-year grant for the Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (CARLA) project to be implemented in three vulnerable districts: Karonga, Dedza and Chikhwawa. The goal of the CARLA project is to improve resilience to current climate variability and future climate change by developing and implementing adaptation strategies and measures to improve agricultural production and rural livelihoods, particularly of smallholder farmers (AfDB 2011a).

Overall, the project takes into consideration many gender issues. The project brief provides a detailed analysis on women's participation in agriculture (GEF 2010 "Situation Analysis": 6), including higher rates of poverty among women and higher vulnerability of female-headed households to climate change (7). "Gender inequality" is mentioned as a "project rationale" (13). The analysis is thorough: in its appraisal report, the AfDB mentions that "While on average, the decision to grow most crops is taken by both husband and wife, women tend to make more decisions on food and men predominate in decision making on cash crops" (AfDB 2011b:11).

Indeed women are specifically targeted as 'beneficiaries': "The primary target group for the CARLA project will be smallholder farmers, including those who are likely to be particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change (for instance, female-headed and ultra poor households)" (GEF 2010: 19). The project planners also appear to have consulted with women during their "multi-stakeholder consultation", including with women's groups, though their identity and number are not discussed ("Project Strategy and Description": 11). Furthermore, Malawi's Ministry of Gender and Community Services is a member of the Project Steering Committee, a rather unique feature among IFI-sponsored agricultural investments.

According to the project proposal (GEF 2010), the project intends to use gender-sensitive content and training materials. It also outlines that a "local gender consultant" was to be hired to provide "ongoing technical assistance" (GEF 2010: 35), though the length of his/her contract, at 7 person months, is substantially shorter than that of other consultants (20 person months for "local climate change adaptation, agriculture, and livelihoods" consultants). There is also no clear indication of what the gender consultancy hopes to achieve and at what stage these 7 person-months of work will feed into the project.

Finally, several of the indicators throughout the project cycle are disaggregated by sex. These include that "all target beneficiaries [be] trained by PYr [Project year] 1 with at least 50% being women"; and that "At least 20 community leaders in each model village trained by PYr 3 with 50% being women" (AfDB 2010b "Results Logical Framework": v-vi).



Woman pumps water (Khulungira, Malawi) 2009 © ILRI/Mann

Applying Gender Action's Essential Gender Analysis Checklist:

Women's/Human Rights: The project does not approach gender in climate change as a human or women's rights issue.

Gender In/equality: The project has included detailed analysis on women's participation in agriculture in project justification (GEF 2010).

Gender Data: Several of the indicators throughout the project cycle are disaggregated by sex. These include that "all target beneficiaries [be] trained by PYr [Project year] 1 with at least 50% being women"; and that "At least 20 community leaders in each model village trained by PYr 3 with 50% being women" (AfDB 2010b "Results Logical Framework": v-vi).

Gender in Context: The project has included thorough discussion of women's roles in agricultural production (GEF 2010).

Gender Access: The project targets women, including female-headed households, and promotes women's access to farmer organizations and services, setting 50 percent female participation benchmarks in many activities (AfDB 2011b "Results Logical Framework": v-vi). Women's groups were consulted in project design (GEF 2010 "Project Strategy and Description": 11).

Gender Input: The project mentions gender input such as gendered training materials and guidelines and content specific to community-based climate change adaptation. The budget provides for a gender consultant (GEF 2010:35).

Gender Output: The project explicitly aims to address gender inequality by focusing on reducing female-headed households' vulnerability to climate change.

Gender Impact: The project considers the differential longer-term impacts of the project on women.

Gender Action Recommendations

The WB and AfDB still have work to do to address gender issues in their agriculture sector projects in Malawi, though most projects analyze gender issues and have participation targets for women. The frequent lack of sex-disaggregated evaluation data to and project components that address gender inequalities risks undermining women's rights and undercutting investments' ability to enhance nutrition, food security, income opportunities, and overall human welfare. Gender Action concludes that:

IFIs must:

- ✓ Consistently approach food security investments from women's and human rights perspectives;
- ✓ Provide grants—not loans—to permit increased public services for poor women and men;
- ✓ Stop promoting the elimination of domestic agricultural subsidies and privatization of agricultural services, two policies that harmfully impact poor women and increase household malnutrition;
- ✓ Promote and implement women's full and equal participation in project design and implementation; in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy and National Gender Program; and
- ✓ Design and collect sex-disaggregated baseline and subsequent data to measure projects' differential gender impacts.

Civil society organizations can:

- ✓ Use Gender Action resources to advocate for IFIs to increase food security investments that address gender inequality and directly benefit women and girls;
- ✓ Pressure IFIs to strengthen and fully implement their gender policies with regard to food security investments;
- ✓ Help those who are negatively impacted by IFI agriculture and food security projects to gather information about IFI policies and procedures and bring gender discrimination cases to IFI accountability mechanisms.

GENDER ACTION

1875 Connecticut Avenue
Suite 500

Washington DC 20009

Tel: 202-949-5463

www.genderaction.org

info@genderaction.org

Gender Action's mission is to promote women's rights and gender equality and ensure women and men equally participate in and benefit from International Financial Institution (IFI) investments in developing countries.



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