



Emergency cash transfers, nutrition and livelihood assistance for chronically food insecure households in Malawi (2016-17)

Final Report

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A. Project Overview

i) Background and Project Rationale:

In May 2016, the Government of Malawi (GoM), assessed 6.5 million people out of total population of 16.8M (39 percent) would not be able to meet their annual food requirements during the 2016/17 consumption period. Additionally, over 1.8 million people were in need of agricultural inputs to restore their livelihoods. About 31 per cent of the cultivated land was affected by the drought, of which 13 per cent was severely affected. Poor nutrition and increased mortality rates were of particular concern in 24 out of a total of 28 districts. Approximately 975,000 children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women were particularly at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition and requiring nutritional treatment.

The high level of food insecurity was due to two consecutive years of below average production of all key agricultural crops. In 2014/15 Malawi had the worst growing season for seven years, and this was followed by the worst floods in history in January 2015 and then widespread prolonged dry spells. Malawi was then severely impacted by one of the strongest El Niño events in 35 years. This climactic phenomenon has brought below average rainfall in the central and southern regions, and higher than normal rainfall in the north of the country. In response the food insecurity, the President of Malawi declared a state of disaster on 12 April 2016.

In order to address the significant challenges posed by El Niño in Malawi, CARE proposed a comprehensive cash transfer, nutrition and livelihoods response to reduce the vulnerability crisis-affected people, especially women, girls and boys in Salima. The project focuses on three immediate outcomes. First, the project will improve capacity of at-risk populations to meet basic needs and reduce negative coping strategies through cash transfers. Second, the project will focus on improving the nutritional status of women and children through awareness raising, demonstrations of best practices related to food preparing and provision of kitchen garden inputs. Finally, the project will increase the self-reliance of at risk population through the provision of seeds and tools as well as training on post-distribution harvest and storage techniques.

ii) Update on Humanitarian Emergency:

During the 2016/17 agricultural season, the country received average to above-average rains in most districts, which facilitated good crop development. These rains also brought flooding to some parts of the country including our target areas in Salima. In February 2017, nearly 8,000 people were displaced in Salima, and thousands completely lost their crops. Despite these losses, the GoM's third-round crop estimates found a 46% increase in maize production as compared to the 2015/16 season. Households in the our target areas have started eating three meals a day once again, and food became readily available on the market at affordable prices. Overall, reliance on negative coping strategies has been reduced. Although Malawi is currently experiencing a maize surplus, chronic poverty and low levels of resilience contribute to the GoM finding that there are 1,043,000 food insecure people for the 2017/18 lean season in 20 districts of the country.

A growing threat is the Fall Armyworm, which entered Karonga District in December 2016 and quickly spread throughout the country. Although the pest initially targeted mainly maize, it is now being found in other key cereal crops such as sorghum and millet. The project sites in Salima experienced approximately 10% losses during the previous rainfed season (December 2016 – March 2017), and between 30% and 80% losses during the 2017 winter cropping season (May

– August 2017). Application of chemical pesticides and Integrated Pest Management practices can reduce losses but are costly and time consuming. Additionally, continued large-scale pesticide application is not an option for the majority of farmers who are subsistence farmers, and it poses a threat to public and environmental health. FAO and the GoM advise that the Fall Armyworm will remain a permanent threat, and presently control is still a significant challenge. On 16th December, the President declared a State of Disaster in 20 out of 28 districts of the country, which are significantly affected by the Fall Armyworm.

In the 2017/18 cropping season, rains started early and initially facilitated early planting and good crop development. However, dry spells for the month of January have affected parts of the country. These dry spells combined with the Fall Armyworm are anticipated to reduce national maize yields to below-average levels.

Another complicating factor is the low selling price for maize. Malawi currently has the lowest maize retail prices in East and Southern Africa, and prices continued to decline in November and December 2017. Although this is beneficial to households who might need to purchase maize on the market, the majority of households are selling maize during this time of year to buy fertilizer or pesticides for the next rainfed crop. Reports from project areas indicate that farmers are selling food stocks that they would otherwise rely upon to get through the upcoming lean season, to purchase these agricultural inputs. Unless other support is provided, they may begin engaging again in negative coping mechanisms such as reduction in meals as the lean season intensifies.

B. Project Description

i) Amendments to Approved Project Proposal:

After CARE identified some cost savings), a one-month no-cost extension was granted which extended the project end date until 31st December 2017. CARE used the additional time and savings to support climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture to an expanded final agricultural inputs cash transfer, which took place in early December (Output 320). This final cash transfer targeted 4,000 households instead of 2,000. In addition, the NCE enabled CARE trained Lead Farmers to reach 10,500 instead of 8,500 people with information best practices related to climate-smart agricultural and integrated pest management/Fall Armyworm control practices.

ii) Purpose and Expected Results:

Ultimate Outcome	Lives saved, suffering alleviated and human dignity maintained		
Intermediate Outcome	Reduced vulnerability of crisis-affected people, especially women and children		
Immediate Outcomes	<u>Immediate outcomes:</u>		
	100 Unconditional Cash Transfers	200 Nutrition	300 Livelihoods
	Improved capacity for at risk households to avoid negative coping strategies and retain	Improved nutrition of lactating and pregnant women and children under five	Increased self-reliance of at-risk and vulnerable households in the coming season

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	and/or recover NFI assets lost due to two years of drought & food insecurity.		
Outputs	110 Vulnerable women and men identified through criteria and consultation with local communities and government officials.	210 Nutrition awareness and knowledge of nutrition-sensitive agriculture promoted to target households)	310 Farmers trained in post-harvest management and storage distribution and inputs provided for lead farmers to demonstrate of construction storage facilities
		220 Cooking and food processing demonstrations held at seed fairs and NFI distributions organized	320 Targeted farmers provided with UCT to buy agricultural inputs for rain fed season
	120 Targeted vulnerable households provided with Unconditional Cash Transfers	230 Vulnerable households particularly women provided with kitchen garden inputs	330 Farmers with access to wetlands/dry season water provided with planting materials
			340 Farmers trained in irrigation farming with treadle pumps and pumps and other equipment distributed for treadle pump farming
Activities	110 Identify vulnerable women and men through criteria and consultation with local communities and government officials.	210 Promote nutrition awareness and knowledge of nutrition-sensitive agriculture to target households	310 Train farmers in post-harvest management and storage distribution and provide inputs for lead farmers to demonstrate construction of storage facilities
		220 Organize cooking and food processing demonstrations to be held at seed fairs and NFI distributions	320 Provide targeted farmers with UCT to buy agricultural inputs for rain fed season
	120 Provide targeted vulnerable households with Unconditional Cash Transfers	230 Provide vulnerable households particularly women with kitchen garden inputs	330 Provide farmers with access to wetlands/dry season water with planting materials
			340 Train farmers in irrigation farming with treadle pumps and distribute pumps and other equipment for treadle pump farming

iii) Completed Activities:

Activity	Status	Description
Baseline study	Completed	The baseline study was completed in February 2017 and the report was finalized in March.
110 Identify vulnerable women and men through criteria and consultation with local communities and government officials.	Completed	The project held entry meetings with district and local government stakeholders to orient them on the project's theory of change and major interventions, and to elicit their support. This was followed by community-based beneficiary identification and registration. Staff shared the selection criteria which considered, among other things, current beneficiaries from food/cash assistance, current UCT beneficiaries from other programs, and the number and nature of household members (pregnant and lactating women, children under 5, elderly and disabled). Government officials were part of the team during registration. Local committee members were selected from the beneficiaries to help facilitate the process.
120 Provide targeted vulnerable households with Unconditional Cash Transfers	Completed	<p>The cash distribution took place at 5 Final Distribution Points (FDPs) over a period of a week. G4S, a security firm, was responsible for handling the cash. CARE supported the project beneficiaries, who signed CARE's registers and received their cash in their designated groups. The beneficiaries were identified by ration cards that CARE had previously distributed, in addition to their national identity cards. On the day, CARE informed the beneficiaries of the process they needed to follow including using their national identification cards, the ration cards and how much money they would receive. The cash transfers took place in March, May and July.</p> <p>Alongside the actual transfer, households participated in drama and informational talks on gender, preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and nutrition issues.</p> <p>Gender-balanced Cash Transfer Coordination Committees were established at each of the distribution points, and trained to handle complaints and support cash distributions. The project also established a comprehensive Complaints Response Mechanism including a toll-free hotline to ensure transparency and mitigate the risk of fraud and abuse.</p>
210 Promote nutrition awareness and knowledge of nutrition-sensitive agriculture to target households	Completed	<p>CARE employed several methods to raise awareness about improved nutritional practices and nutrition-sensitive agriculture. The project started with mass awareness raising sessions at community meetings. After the larger session, individuals would be divided into smaller groups and given the opportunity to receive the information and request any clarifications. The groups would gather again afterwards to cross-share the information they had received and what they had learnt. At the end of all this, the technical expert would then fill in the gaps and answer any additional questions.</p> <p>Positive nutritional practices were then reinforced during all key project events, such as cash transfers and NFI distributions. For example, Theater for Development was used to promote the consumption of diversified foods from the six food groups. Informational talks are also given by district government nutrition focal points.</p>

		The project has also worked directly with community-based health and nutrition promoters to ensure the inclusion of project beneficiaries in peer-to-peer learning and monitoring events.
220 Organize cooking and food processing demonstrations to be held at seed fairs and NFI distributions	Completed	<p>Cooking and processing demonstrations were also held at cash transfers and with agricultural groups to reinforce the linkages between agriculture and nutrition. The demonstrations are managed by CARE Group nutrition promoters, using locally available and familiar foods. For example, a demonstration might demonstrate how to fortify a child's porridge with peanut flour, fruit, or small fish. Other recipes show how multiple food groups can be cooked in one pot including cereals, vegetables, and animal proteins. Even though this activity initially targeted the beneficiaries from cash transfer or agriculture programmes, all members of the community were welcome to participate. There was an added emphasis on recipes that would be the most beneficial for pregnant and lactating women, and children under five. Given that men have a significant role to play in decision-making on what foods to grow/purchase for the household, they were also engaged in these events. Members who were invited to this event brought their food and cooked it themselves. Technical support from CARE and the government was provided where needed, but volunteers and community members led the activity.. Project beneficiaries participated in at least one, and sometimes up to three, demonstrations.</p> <p>The project is also linked with local distributors of solar dryers to promote their products during these, and other, events. Solar dryers enable households to dry fruits and vegetables to extend the consumption period of these nutritious items.</p>
230 Provide vulnerable households particularly women with kitchen garden inputs	Completed	The beneficiary selection process for kitchen garden inputs considered household demographics; i.e. presence of children or pregnant and lactating women, as well as their access to resources such as land and water. By July, all land preparation works as well as training and input distribution were completed. Some of the gardens were established right at the irrigation schemes to ensure access to water. Vegetables which are grown in these gardens (amaranths, local rape and cat whiskers) fall under one of the six food groups that were used during the cooking demonstrations.
310 Train farmers in post-harvest management and storage distribution and provide inputs for lead farmers to demonstrate construction of storage facilities	Completed	<p>Lead Farmers were selected from within the communities and trained at the irrigation schemes noted above. Training topics included seed preservation and storage, types of pests and their control and types of crop losses and their control. They were also oriented on how to establish a revolving fund to use in the schemes.</p> <p>To multiply the impact of this training, lead farmers have shared the training they received to their fellow farmers. Each lead farmer managed to train an average of 60 other farmers. These training sessions were held in the villages where lead farmers live. Lead farmers would demonstrate their plots, pest and disease control methods, and techniques to manage post-harvest losses.</p>
320 Provide targeted farmers with UCT to buy agricultural inputs for rain fed season	Completed	<p>Local communities identified new beneficiary households based on high household dependency ratio, poverty level, poor harvest in the last rain fed season, and limited access to agricultural inputs. Each household had to have access to land and labour resources.</p> <p>After farmers were identified, they were registered and provided with a ration card. Project staff conducted community sensitizations activities to provide project participants with orientation, inform them of the</p>

		<p>amount of the coming transfer, and distribution plans. Beneficiaries from different villages were asked to group in certain villages to minimize walking distances, and G4S was again engaged to provide the Cash-in-Transit services at each Final Distribution Point. On the day of the distributions, Village Heads and Civil Protection Committees supported organizing the distribution. Nutrition volunteers conducted cooking demonstrations as described in activity 220 above. Theater for Development was used to explore gender-related issues of intra-household decision-making on using cash, as well as issues of nutrition and gender-based violence. Participants who were interviewed during the event shared their intention to use the cash to purchase seed, fertilizers, chemicals to combat the Fall Armyworm, and to a lesser extent to purchase other household's basic needs.</p>
330 Provide farmers with access to wetlands/dry season water with planting materials	Completed	The project took a staged approach in which farmers must first demonstrate adequate access to residual moisture/irrigation before planting. Additionally, farmers must have adequately prepared their land for the seed. The chosen farmers had lands spread across 44 irrigation schemes. Farmers harvested their crops during July – August. Despite challenges with the Fall Armyworm, farmers reported that the harvest will contribute to their food security.
340 Train farmers in irrigation farming with treadle pumps and distribute pumps and other equipment for treadle pump farming	Completed	Around 1,000 farmers were initially identified and registered with the project based on their interest, vulnerability, and capacity. Treadle pumps were then purchased and distributed while practical training was provided to all beneficiary farmers. Topics included assembling the treadle pump, developing an operation and maintenance fund, performing basic maintenance and repairs, locations to purchase spare parts, and proper use. These farmers continued to receive support in correct agronomic practices from the lead farmers identified by the project.

C. Actual Results Achieved

i) Performance Table:

	Male	Female	TOTAL
Total number of beneficiaries reached by the project	19,500	19,500	56,100 (out of a target of 54,000)

Outcome 1:	Improved capacity for at risk households to avoid negative coping strategies and retain and/or recover NFI assets lost due to two years of drought & food insecurity.	
Total number of beneficiaries for this outcome:	27,000 (13,500 men and 13,500 women)	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
% of beneficiaries that report less resorting to negative coping strategies	75% of beneficiaries surveyed found to have avoided negative coping strategies	67% of beneficiaries surveyed found to have avoided negative coping strategies, compared to 33% at baseline. This represents a decrease of 51%.
% of UCT recipients that are women	At least 60% of recipients are female	84.7% of recipients were female

% of recipients that report satisfaction with the UCT processes	80% of recipients report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the UCT delivery processes	63% of recipients report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the UCT delivery processes
# of men and women that will benefit from UCT	27,000(13,500 men and 13,500 women) will benefit from UCT	27,000 people (approx. 50% women, benefited from UCT.
Explanation of results:		
<p>CARE reached 4,500 households, who were targeted to receive UCT through three months of transfers. The final cash transfer took place in July. Based on average family size of six in the targeted locations, 27,000 people have benefited from the intervention, of which approximately 50% are women.</p> <p>The project exceeded the percentage of women recipients of the UCT by over 20% as many men were engaged in the fishing industry. Women therefore had greater responsibility in managing daily households errands compared to other parts of the country.</p> <p>During the project implementation, both ADCs and reviews undertaken indicated that the community expressed that CARE registration was more inclusive compared to other interventions that used the same approach. The results also indicated that the community felt that CARE was approachable as an organization, and that they could express their thoughts and ideas and would be heard. Community members thought of the process as transparent and accountable. Those who were not satisfied indicated that the transfer value was too low, and the number of transfers were too little for them to be able to meet the full range of what they need. While we did not meet our original 80% target, the community members clearly noted that in general, they were satisfied with the UCT process.</p> <p>67% of people were found to be resorting to negative or “emergency” coping mechanisms during the baseline survey. This means that 33% avoided negative coping strategies, as per the indicator above. At the end of the project, as measured by the Livelihoods Coping Strategy Index, only 33% reported that they still resort to those mechanisms by the end of the project, representing 67% of people who avoided negative coping strategies as per the indicator above. Emergency coping mechanisms includes begging, selling one’s house or land, or selling female animals.</p>		
Outcome 2: Improved nutrition of lactating and pregnant women and children under five		
Total number of beneficiaries for this outcome:	51,000 people (8,500 Households) Males: 25,500 Females: 25,500 will benefit from improved nutritional awareness	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
% of recipients reporting improved consumption of diversified food by PLW and children >5	25% of recipients reporting improved consumption of diversified food by PLW and children >5	There is a 44% increase in dietary diversity score in comparison to baseline assessment.
# of men and women that will benefit from improved nutritional awareness	51,000 people (8,500 Households) Males: 25,500 Females: 25,500 will benefit from improved nutritional awareness	56,100 people (roughly 28,050 females and 28,050 males) have been reached to date.
Explanation of results:		
<p>The 44% increase in average dietary diversity scores, moving from 4.16 at baseline to 6 at end-line indicates that households have improved their consumption of a diversified diet. There was a particular increase in vegetables, fruit, meat, and eggs consumption. This enhancement will deliver micronutrients and protein to a diet that was largely starch-based previously. During the project implementation, the M&E team at CARE realized that it was not feasible to track individual improvement for each beneficiary. Therefore, the team opted to measure the increase in average</p>		

dietary scores as an alternative indicator for enhanced consumption amongst children under five and pregnant and lactating women.

Due to the NCE the number of targeted beneficiaries surpassed the initial target. Our teams used cash distribution activities as one of the main avenues to raise awareness on nutrition. An additional 850 households were reached through cooking demonstrations and messaging at the seven irrigation schemes. In both sites, Theater for Development groups were used to convey nutritional messages as well as information sharing by a nutrition expert.

Targeted households interviewed during household visits said that they have learned that it does not cost as much and or require significant effort to consume food that comprises all six-food groups. . Male-headed households expressed their understanding to the linkages between their role and power at the household level in making decisions about food consumption. They have further committed to provide the money required to have nutritionally balanced food at their houses.

Outcome 3:		
Increased self-reliance of at-risk and vulnerable households in the coming season		
Total number of beneficiaries for this outcome:		24,000 (12,000 men and 12,000 women) will benefit from increased self-reliance
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
% of HH reporting improved capacity for food security in 2017 compared to same time in 2016.	80% of HH's targeted report they are in a more resilient position in June 2017 compared to June 2016	86% of targeted households were categorized as having "acceptable" food consumption by end-line survey.
# of men and women that will benefit from increased self-reliance	24,000 (12,000 men and 12,000 women) will benefit from increased self-reliance	36,000 people (roughly 50% women), were reached through self-reliance activities
Explanation of results:		
<p>Over the lifespan of the project, Food Consumption Scores increased dramatically. During the baseline assessment, 39% of participants had "poor" food consumption while 44% were at the "borderline", and 17% showing "acceptable" scoring. By the end-line survey, only 2% were categorized for "poor" consumption, 12% fell within the "borderline" category and 86% of targeted households were categorized as having "acceptable" food consumption.</p> <p>Support for winter cropping activities (seed plus irrigation equipment and training) reached 2,000 households, and allowed them to grow an additional crop per year (100% of target). At end-line, the project found that 83% of households were food secure for at least 4 -12 months, which is higher than the baseline average of 4.9 months. Households that engaged in winter cropping activities had an average of 10.6 months of food security. These positive results are particularly impressive given the challenge that the Fall Armyworm has posed particularly in the winter crop.</p> <p>CARE timed the transfer of the final UCT to be in December when households traditionally start to plant. Due to our some cost savings, in December CARE reached 4,000 households with this slightly larger transfer. This enabled us to increase our total beneficiaries from 24,000 to 36,000 (18,000 women). Although it is too early to see the impact of this transfer, beneficiaries shared their plans to use the funds to invest in agricultural livelihoods, mainly through purchasing fertilizers, pesticides against the Fall Armyworm, and improved seed.</p>		

Outcome 1 – Improved capacity for at risk households to avoid negative coping strategies and retain and/or recover NFI assets lost due to two years of drought & food insecurity	
Output 110 :	Vulnerable women and men identified through criteria and consultation with local communities and government officials

Total number of beneficiaries for this output:		4,500 people (at least 60% female) receive UCT each month for 3 months
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# of men and women identified through established criteria and consultation	4,500 people (at least 60% female) identified through established criteria and consultation	4,500 people identified 3,810 female & 690 male (84.7% female)
Explanation of results:		
CARE followed a community-based approach to identify and register all beneficiaries, as initially planned. The process saw a higher number of women registration than anticipated due to the involvement of men in the fishing industry. This has given women a greater role in household management, unlike other parts of the country.		
Output 120 :		Targeted vulnerable households provided with Unconditional Cash Transfers
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:		4,500
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# women and men receiving UCT each month for 3 months	4,500 people (at least 60% female) receive UCT each month for 3 months	4,500 people (84.7% female) received the UCT for three months
Explanation of results:		
CARE completed all cash transfers by July. During the course of three months, 4,500 households received transfers equivalent to around CAD 12. Feedback from most of the beneficiaries indicated that they used the money to pay for school fees, clothes, vegetables and other food items. Some of the beneficiaries bought one or two hens to keep at their houses and support their nutritional resilience.		

Outcome 2 – Improved nutrition of lactating and pregnant women and children under five		
Output 210 :		Nutrition awareness and knowledge of nutrition-sensitive agriculture promoted to target households
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:		8,500
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
% of women and men who report participating in nutritional awareness activities	50% of people (at least 70% women) report that they participated in nutrition awareness sessions	<i>*This indicator was measured as a number rather than a % for more accurate tracking.</i> At least 8,500 people who participated in cash transfers received nutrition awareness messages, of whom approximately 78% were female.
Explanation of results:		
In the first part of the project, nutrition awareness activities mainly took place during cash transfers but were also integrated into the irrigation schemes activities. In the second part of the project, additional awareness events took place at other venues through Care Group Volunteers who are community-based nutrition promoters. According to the end-line survey, 100% of those who attended the UCTs received nutrition messages, while 86% reported attending the cooking demonstration.		
Output 220 :		Cooking and food processing demonstrations held at seed fairs and NFI distributions organized
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:		12
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# cooking and food processing demonstrations	12 cooking & food processing demonstrations held	15 cooking and food processing demonstrations completed
Explanation of results:		
Five cooking and processing demonstrations were held in the first part of the project. Another ten events were completed in September and December to make use of the more diverse food that is		

available in local markets. Seven out of the 44 irrigation schemes were selected to conduct the cooking demonstrations. These sites were central to allow members from the other schemes to attend as well. An average of 80 people attended each of the cooking demonstrations, of which, 80% were female participants. The last cooking demonstrations took place at the five cash distribution points that reached about 4,000 project participants. In the end-line survey, 86% of households reported attending cooking demonstrations.		
Output 230 :	Vulnerable households particularly women provided with kitchen garden inputs	
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:	3,000	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# HHs provided with kitchen garden inputs and training	3,000 households (at least 60% women) are provided with kitchen garden inputs and training	3,000 households were provided with kitchen garden inputs (72% female)
Explanation of results:		
Out of the 3,000 registered households, 30 people received training of trainers to train other farmers on fence making, land preparation, sowing, and pest and disease control. These trainers were asked to undertake several training sessions to reach as many farmers as possible. As a result, all 3,000 beneficiaries received training through this process. All vegetables grown as part of the kitchen garden projects were consumed rather than sold. Beneficiary households indicated harvesting the necessary quantities that meet their needs for each day.		

Outcome 3 – Increased self-reliance of at-risk and vulnerable households in the coming season		
Output 310 :	Farmers trained in post-harvest management and storage distribution and inputs provided for lead farmers to demonstrate of construction storage facilities	
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:	2,000	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# Community Volunteers trained in post-harvest management	20 Community Volunteers trained in post-harvest management	49 community volunteers were trained in post-harvest management.
# demonstration granaries built	20 demonstration granaries built	No demonstration granaries were built, as this activity was changed after consultation.
# farmers trained by community volunteers	2,000 farmers trained by community volunteers	2,940 farmers trained by community volunteers.
Explanation of results:		
During the first part of the project, 19 volunteer lead farmers received training on post-harvest management. Following consultations with farmers and government staff, the granaries component was removed from the training. Farmers and government staff had concerns regarding this model due to local cultural issues in this particular part of the country and they deemed the model not feasible.		
Prior to undertaking the final UCT for agricultural inputs, an additional 30 lead farmers received training on appropriate agronomic techniques before the rain fed season. This training will allow them to support many of the 4,000 UCT recipients with land preparation, planting and Fall Armyworm control.		
The target for each lead farmer to train 100 fellow farmers was revised and reconsidered as it was regarded to ambitious. Lead farmers initially trained 20 fellow farmers each. The number of farmers trained by the lead farmers increased to at least 60 following the increase of number of sessions each lead farmer conducted to ensure reaching as many as farmers as possible.		

Farmers reported practicing post-harvest management techniques they learned during the training sessions. Most of them were able to store seeds for the rain fed growing season. The majority of farmers reported that they experienced less loss in the stored crop produce. Following the training, farmers used an improved way to handle their produce from the start at their fields until the last stage at the storage sites. They treated their produce to avoid pesticides/losses and budgeted for the produce to last for a given period.		
Output 320 :	Targeted farmers provided with UCT to buy agricultural inputs for rainfed season	
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:	2,000	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# farmers provided with UCT	2,000 farming households provided with UCT	4,000 farmers provided with UCT valued at CAD \$33.50
Explanation of results:		
CARE undertook this activity in December to facilitate the purchase of agricultural inputs prior to the rain fed season. Even though this grant was unconditional and beneficiaries were free to spend the cash they received as they find it best to meet their needs, the type of targeted beneficiaries and messaging around agricultural inputs encouraged beneficiaries to use the cash for agricultural purposes to enhance their nutritional resilience. CARE's interviews with beneficiaries indicated that the majority of them were planning to use the money to buy seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to control the Fall Armyworm.		
Output 330 :	Farmers with access to wetlands/dry season water provided with planting materials	
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:	2,000	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Actual results
# farmers provided with planting material	2,000 farmers provided with planting materials	2,000 farmers (1,263 female & 737 male) provided with planting materials
Explanation of results:		
The selection of the 2,000 farmers covered all 44 irrigation schemes. All 2,000 farmers successfully planted the seed and completed the harvest. The majority of farmers used the harvest for their own consumption, while others sold part of it. For example, one farmer sold his produce from the plot in the scheme and got MK 78,000 (\$130 CAD). This enabled him to buy food for the household and buy seed for the next rainfed growing season. For this reason, none of the farmers that received the winter cropping seed received the final UCT for agriculture inputs.		
Output 340 :	Farmers trained in irrigation farming with treadle pumps and pumps and other equipment distributed for treadle pump farming	
Total number of beneficiaries for this output:	1,000	
Performance Indicators	Expected results	Performance Indicators
# treadle pumps distributed # farmers trained in irrigation and pump maintenance	100 treadle pumps distributed 1,000 farmers trained in irrigation and pump maintenance	85 treadle pumps distributed 850 farmers trained in irrigation and pump maintenance
Explanation of results:		
CARE was able to purchase and distribute less number of treadle pumps than planned as the price turned out to be slightly higher than our original budget. The project could only procure 85 treadle pumps supporting 850 farmers. Distribution of treadle pumps was proportional with the number of farmers at each irrigation scheme. For example, a group of 75 members at one of the irrigation schemes received seven treadle pumps to match their needs.		

ii) Summary Assessment of Project Performance:

Summary Assessment Table of Project Performance		
Expected Result	Rating	Explanation of Rating, including justification for variances

Outcome 1: Improved capacity for at risk households to avoid negative coping strategies and retain and/or recover NFI assets lost due to two years of drought & food insecurity.		
Output 110: Vulnerable women and men identified through criteria and consultation with local communities and government officials.	AE	This output achieved its target by registering the planned number of project participants (4,500) through a community-based process.
Output 120: Targeted vulnerable households provided with Unconditional Cash Transfers	AE	All 4,500 vulnerable households were provided with UCT for three months.
Outcome 2: Improved nutrition of lactating and pregnant women and children under five		
Output 210: Promote nutrition awareness and knowledge of nutrition-sensitive agriculture to target households	AE	All 8,500 planned participants received messages on nutrition-sensitive agriculture.
Output 220: Cooking and food processing demonstrations held at seed fairs and NFI distributions organized	EE	CARE held 15 cooking and processing demonstrations exceeding the initially planned 12 demonstrations.
Output 230: Vulnerable households particularly women provided with kitchen garden inputs	AE	All 3,000 planned households received kitchen garden inputs.
Outcome 3: – Increased self-reliance of at-risk and vulnerable households in the coming season		
Output 310: Farmers trained in post-harvest management and storage distribution and inputs provided for lead farmers to demonstrate of construction storage facilities	EE	Rather than the targeted 20 lead farmers, a total number of 49 lead farmers received training in various agronomic techniques including post-harvest storage and Fall Armyworm control.
Output 320: Targeted farmers provided with UCT to buy agricultural inputs for rain fed season	EE	CARE was able to double the number of beneficiaries through providing cash transfers to 4,000 households instead of the initially targeted 2,000.
Output 330: Farmers with access to wetlands/dry season water provided with planting materials	AE	CARE reached all 2,000 planned households with planting materials for the winter crop.
Output 340: Farmers trained in irrigation farming with treadle pumps and pumps and other equipment distributed for treadle pump farming	MP	Due to an unexpected increase in the price of treadle pumps, CARE was able to reach only 850 out of the planned 1,000 farmers with irrigation activities.
Rating Scale EE: Exceeding/exceeded expected result UR: Unable to Rate AE: Achieving/achieved expected result MP: Experienced Manageable Problems OP: Experienced Other Problems		

D. Performance Factors

- **Relevance:** When the project started, WFP was providing some support to households in order to meet their food needs, but there was no support for non-food expenses. Other households had a marginal production but would have to sell their harvest or other assets to meet other basic needs. The non-conditionality of cash transfers provided by this project supported these two types of families in meeting critical basic needs. As a result, resorting to negative coping strategies, such as taking children out of school, was reduced. Some households, especially those affected by the 2017 floods, had lost their seed and required inputs immediately to replant using residual moisture, to ensure greater food insecurity for

the next season. The project's approach of immediate input distribution for these households was equally relevant given the situation.

- **Appropriateness:** During project design, different groups of households were targeted with cash transfers and livelihood activities to support as many households as possible. This was also based on local government's request to scale up CARE's assistance to the most vulnerable. However based on monitoring data and participatory reflections with beneficiaries, it may have been more appropriate to target all interventions (for example the UCT and livelihood interventions) to the same households to have greater impact, rather than focusing on different households. For example, although the end-line demonstrated that average household food security increased, the project, as initially designed, did not reach all households with the livelihoods activities.
- **Efficiency:** Due to efficiency in implementing the first part of the project, CARE was able to cost save under personnel and the operational expenses. For example, by carefully planning activities and leveraging the support of another CARE project operating in the same area, as well as the support of government extension staff, the project was able to use three Field Advisors instead of the four who were originally budgeted for hiring. Furthermore, CARE was able to negotiate with suppliers to deliver goods (e.g. seed, treadle pumps) directly to central storage facilities, which meant CARE did not need to rent a truck. These savings were re-programmed to maximize beneficiary reach and provide assistance to additional number of people in the second part of the project. The response was implemented in a timely manner. Agricultural inputs for winter cropping and the final UCT to facilitate input purchases were all delivered at appropriate times for the planting season.
- **Gender Equality:** CARE conducted a Rapid Gender Analysis once implementation was underway. Based on the findings from the RGA, CARE developed a Gender Action Plan. The RGA ensured that the team had complete information about the different needs and capacities of men, women, girls and boys, and that it was able to design activities under a gender-sensitive lens. For example, the RGA revealed that most of the households were either polygamous, and/or the male, the head of the household, was often away for long periods to fish in the nearby lake. This information was useful for planning purposes as CARE increased its internal targets for women's participation. For most of the implemented activities, female participants exceeded 75%.

As per the Gender Action Plan, CARE mainstreamed gender in the design and implementation of project activities. For instance, during cash distributions, pregnant and lactating women, and other groups with special needs, were assisted first. CARE team made sure that all cash distribution activities ended well before dark to ensure that all beneficiaries could travel home safely. CARE's post-distribution monitoring survey revealed that beneficiaries were satisfied with the safety and security at the distribution points and did not experience security incidents while traveling home from project activities. All committees in the project area had male and female members, albeit basic, but rather acritical step to encouraging a sustained and equitable participation in the project. Trainings were all held locally in each community. Sites and timings of training sessions were identified based on consultations with all participants including female participants. CARE has found that holding activities closer to home increased women's participation because it minimized travel time and costs and made it easier for women to handle childcare.

CARE's experience with cash transfers over the years in Malawi has revealed that handing cash to women can increase tension and GBV rates within the household if gender norms and GBV considerations are not addressed alongside the distributions. In other situations, women could be forced to give the entirety of the transfer to the husband or male relative. For this reason, and based on the gender analysis undertaken for this project, the team used Theatre for Development to discuss critical issues related to gender, such as traditional stereotypes related to masculinity, controlling resources, especially cash, and femininity. The project also facilitated discussions on how cash is spent, and promoted joint decision-making. CARE's complaints response mechanisms, including a toll-free hotline, helped to mitigate the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, which usually poses a real risk in cash-based interventions.

CARE also incorporates gender within its monitoring and evaluation processes. CARE staff routinely collected and analysed sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) to understand how project participation and outcomes differ according to sex and age. Teams use this information during monthly M&E reflection meetings to reflect on any adaptations required to the design or implementation of activities to maximize participation and results for targeted groups.

- **Environment:** For irrigation activities, the project ensured that all water sources, including streams, had sufficient water that the activities would not negatively affect downstream water needs. The project's promotion of government-recommended agronomic techniques, including zero tillage farming, can contribute to reducing erosion and loss of topsoil.
- **Participation:** During project start up, project staff met with the District Executive Committee (DEC), and Area and Village Development Committees (ADCs and VDCs) as well as civil protection committees at different levels. These meetings were used to reconfirm needs assessment findings and discuss implementation plans including roles and responsibilities between CARE and relevant government entities. CARE also held Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation, Reflection, and Learning (PMERL) sessions to discuss project progress and challenges with a cross panel of committee members, beneficiaries, extension staff, and ADC/VDC members. These sessions were particularly appreciated by participants as it provided an open forum for expressing project feedback. The most common feedback received was that transfer values were too small and that the design should have targeted the same households with the self-reliance and humanitarian response activities. On the positive side, CARE learned that the actual choice of activities was considered very relevant.
- **Coordination:** At the national level, the Emergency Team Leader, who provided overall oversight to the project implementation, was part of the Humanitarian Country Team, the Food Security Cluster, and the Cash Working Group meetings, led by the UN and the Government of Malawi. These fora provided an opportunity to share best practices and be constantly informed about emerging needs within the sectors. At the district level, CARE is a member of the District Civil Protection Committee and the Civil Society Coordinating Committee. Coordination with civil society and the District Executive Committee helped avoid any possible duplication of activities. CARE was able to coordinate with other actors to coordinate on support. For example, CARE provided targeted flood affected communities with early livelihoods recovery interventions, while other actors provided the same communities with shelter and NFIs assistance. In addition, in response to Fall Armyworm, CARE coordinated with COOPI to ensure appropriate support. COOPI focused on training

government extension staff in the project area, while CARE focused on training farmers. COOPI also provided sprayers for use in applying the pesticides that beneficiaries supported by CARE used.

- **Safety and Security:** No security incidents or issues were recorded. CARE very carefully planned the cash transfer distribution to ensure that it was safe for our beneficiaries and that there were no security incidents.

E. Withdrawal and Transfer

For cash transfer activities, these will cease with the closure of the project. However, local committees and government extension staff will continue to monitor and support the self-reliance activities connected to livelihoods. For example, Area Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) continue to visit areas targeted by this project and supervise the lead farmers who received training. They collect reports and share with the district.

Nutrition activities will continue to be supported through a GIZ-funded nutrition project, which CARE is implementing in the district. As of the submission of this report, CARE is in the final stages of negotiating an extension to this project, which will see the scale-up of nutrition support throughout the district, including our project sites.

The project left an increasingly resilient local committee and groups with a higher capacity who are able to work independently. Additionally, activities those were designed to build self-reliance will contribute towards longer-term food security outcomes for the affected groups, reducing their need for humanitarian assistance. The treadle pumps left in the care of the community for example, will enable year-round agriculture production.

F. Financial Reporting (to be completed with Annex 8)

i) Approved Budget versus Actual Expenditures

- Provide a budget table clearly comparing original budget line items to actual disbursements.

Budget Item Line	Approved Budget	Actual Disbursement
Personnel cost	213,009	191,609
Supplies and Materials:	308,745	373,289
Logistics:	114,193	91,594
Local Administrative Costs:	55,902	45,143
Support to Partner Orgs:		
Assessment, Monitoring & Evaluation	43,066	35,123
Safety and Security:	9,271	7,429
Total	800,000	800,000

G. Lessons Learned

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Emergency cash transfers, nutrition and livelihood assistance for chronically food insecure households in Malawi (2016-17)

Key lessons learned from this project include:

- The use of the local government entities, such as the ADC and Area Civil Protection Committees, helped CARE to deliver positive results and created greater sustainability. This approach allows the community to have an increased sense of ownership to the development that takes place in their home areas. It also offers a platform for sharing and discussing the proposed plans, avoiding duplication with other actors, and creating a platform for stakeholders to discuss actively projects' activities and results.
- The project adapted a participatory approach to identify and register project's beneficiaries, in which local communities identified beneficiaries themselves based on the selection criteria that CARE shared with them. Feedback from local communities indicated their satisfaction with the selection of the right beneficiaries. They regarded this approach inclusive and helpful to avoid any bias or the misuse of power by local leaders to impose particular participants. Local leaders were part of the selection process. The project's robust complaints response mechanism, including a toll-free hotline, was another channel to receive feedback, including on the selection and registration process, and reduce the risk of abuse in different processes related to the project implementation.
- Implementing awareness raising campaigns within other project's activities proved effectiveness. CARE raised awareness through Theater for Development and cooking demonstrations during cash and agricultural inputs distribution. Mass gatherings at such project activities offered a convenient forum to disseminate information and reach a high number of individuals each time. It would have been useful to also follow these large-scale activities with peer-to-peer learning and behavior change activities on nutrition, such as through the Care Group model or PD-Hearth.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GoM: Government of Malawi
COOPI: International Cooperation Foundation
GIZ: German Society for International Cooperation
UN: United Nations
FAO: food and agriculture organization
WFP: World Food Programme
CAD: Canadian Dollar
MK: Malawian kwacha
NCE: No Cost Extension
NFI: Non-Food Items
UCT: Unconditional Cash Transfers
FDPs: Final Distribution Points
ADCs: Area Development Committees
VDCs: Village Development Committees
DEC: District Executive Committee
AEDOs: Area Extension Development Officers
RGA: Rapid Gender Analysis
GBV: Gender Based Violence
SADD: sex and age disaggregated data
PMERL: Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation, Reflection, and Learning