

Feed the Future Developing Local Extension Capacity

Country Engagement Plan: Malawi

I. Introduction

The Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) project's planned engagement in Malawi leverages CARE's existing Pathways to Secure Livelihoods Program (Pathways) already operating in the country. Pathways aims to empower poor women smallholder farmers to overcome the gender-based constraints that hinder women's productive and equitable engagement in agriculture by achieving three inter-related objectives: 1) Increase the productive engagement of 65,000 poor women in sustainable agriculture and contribute to their empowerment; 2) Enhance the scale of high-quality, women-responsive agriculture programming at CARE; and 3) Contribute to the global discourse that surrounds women and agriculture. The cornerstone of Pathways is the Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS) model of integrated extension and advisory services (EAS). Designed as a common program intervention model, the FFBS aims to go beyond demonstrating **agricultural practices** that can increase yields, to build capacity and essential skills around **market engagement**, **gender equity and empowerment issues**, and **nutrition practices**. The engagement will create and disseminate digital content across these four domains based on existing FFBS modules, and provide evidence for the relative efficacy of two different content platforms, measured by adoption of practices.

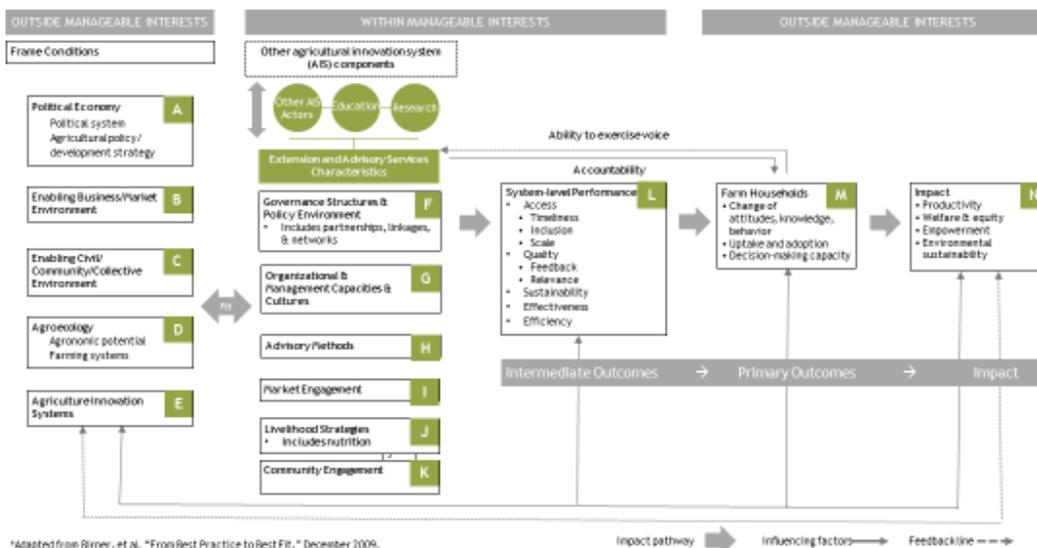
In Malawi, CARE's Pathways program currently works through a network of 90 Community Based Trainers (CBTs) to reach 16,000 farmers (90% of whom are women), through building on existing collectives in which they are members, particularly village savings and loans associations (VSLA) and producer groups. Through these efforts:

- women's access to extension services increased from 29% at baseline to 82%;
- the number of visits/contacts with extension service providers "in the last 12 months" nearly doubled from 2.7 to 5.3 over the same time period;
- nearly 70% of women adopted at least three improved agricultural practices;
- women's self-confidence as well as their decision making and control over resources in the household increased;
- control over household and agricultural assets increased by over 16 percentage points from the baseline;
- access to output markets increased from 42% to 63%;
- women engaged in of collective sales worth over 62,000 USD; and
- FFBS groups introduced "FFBS Financing" based on the VSLA model to facilitate collective marketing activities, aggregation of inputs, and purchase of distressed sales of production from members immediately after harvest for storage and sale at a higher price.

The planned engagement in Malawi fits DLEC’s criteria for country engagement as described in the table below

Inclusion Criteria	
- Feed the Future Country (FtF) and/or USAID Mission presence	- Malawi is a USAID FtF country
- Funding interests and/or criteria	- USAID has made significant investments in extension and advisory services, and has been consulted about a possible engagement.
Selection Criteria	
- Short time-frame to demonstrable results	- By building off CARE’s existing Pathways program, initial results will be available in just two years.
- Measureable	- The activity will compare retention and adoption between groups exposed to digital curricula vs. non-digitized curricula.
- Within DLEC’s manageable interests	- The activity is implemented in geographies known to the consortium, leveraging existing staff and activities. It also addresses EAS characteristics within DLEC’s designated manageable interests.
- DLEC value-add	- DLEC provides value add by combining two proven approaches that were developed by DLEC consortium members.
- Local stakeholder buy-in (sustainability)	- CARE works closely with District-level extension agents, is a member of MAFAAS, and DLEC will work closely with ongoing EAS activities in Malawi including USAID’s SANE project and IFPRI’s research on extension, as well as ongoing USAID-funded initiatives including Ubale and the Ag Diversification Activity ADA. Evidence generated by the activity can lead to buy-in to the DLEC approach by the Government of Malawi and other EAS stakeholders in Malawi and beyond.

Adapted* “Best Fit” Framework for Designing and Analyzing EAS



The planned Malawi engagement also fits a number of key characteristics outlined in DLEC’s adapted “best-fit” framework for designing and analyzing EAS. The primary characteristic addressed by the engagement is “livelihood strategies,” because of the focus of the FFBS on integration of content as well as gender. However, other characteristics addressed at least in part include: advisory methods (comparing digital vs. non-digital methods); market engagement (through market engagement related modules); and community engagement (through targeting women).

II. Objectives

The planned engagement aims to accomplish the following objectives:

- Create and disseminate a total of eight community-based digital videos (two in each of the four different content domains) to FFBS producer group members and their communities. Each 8-10 minute video will highlight between three and five key practices promoted through the FFBS;
- Compare scale of outreach, and retention of knowledge and adoption of practices among FFBS producer group members and other community members viewing digital vs. analog content;
- Generate demand in the FFBS approach and digital content among government and other EAS stakeholders in Malawi and regionally, as well as within other Pathways country programs.

In addition to contributing to DLEC’s IR 1.2 “Strategies of EAS Strengthening Piloted, Evaluated, Documented and Shared with Other Stakeholders,” the engagement will also contribute to IR 1.1 by supporting DLEC’s diagnostic activities including the stakeholder mapping, desk review,

and stakeholder meeting, and to Objective 2 through regular participation and contribution to DLEC's Community of Practice.

III. Activities

The engagement will take place in the two districts, Kasungu and Dowa, where Pathways is already engaging 16,000 farmers in producers groups and VSLAs through its FFBS approach. Although these districts lay outside of the current Feed the Future Zone of Influence (Zol), they are adjacent to the Zol and so the lessons learned during the engagement will be broadly applicable to the conditions of the Zol. A number of activities will be undertaken during the engagement including production and dissemination of eight videos (two in each of the four domains of the FFBS curricula as well as monitoring and dissemination activities (see Annex 1 for an impact logic / results chain and Annex 2 for a detailed work plan and timeline). Each of these activities is described in more detail below.

a. Community Selection

DLEC will randomly select 40 FFBS groups to participate in the engagement. These 40 FFBS groups represent approximately 140 independent producer groups comprising approximately 3,500 farmers. The 40 groups comprised of 20 'treatment' and 20 'control'. Selection of these groups will be done through the following processes: 1) Pathways recently completed a strength assessment of producer groups, which categorizes them as "poor," "average," or "good" based upon a numerical score; 2) As each FFBS is comprised of between 2 and 4 producer groups, Pathways will create an average score for each FFBS using a simple (unweighted) average of the scores of each of the member producer groups; 3) DLEC will then categorize each FFBS as "poor," "average," or "good" based on these averaged scores; and 4) DLEC will then randomly select 20 FFBS groups (from about 150 FFBS groups in total) from each of the three categories (2 poor, 14 average, and 4 good) to participate in video dissemination activities. Treatment FFBS groups will then be compared against others within the same categories to look at adoption rates and knowledge of group members using Pathways' regular ongoing monitoring processes.

b. Video Production

Pathways and Digital Green global technical staff will work with the CARE Malawi team to adapt FFBS training materials approaches for video. Pathways Field Officers, with engagement of district-level government extension staff where possible, will produce short videos featuring farmers demonstrating improved agricultural, nutritional, marketing, or gender-based practices, or sharing testimonials using low cost pocket video cameras, microphones, and tripods.

c. Video Dissemination

The videos will be distributed using mobile, battery-operated projectors among FFBS groups. A trained community-based trainer will facilitate a discussion among the viewing group and record their feedback, questions and interest level. Audience data and feedback will inform production and distribution of the next set of videos in an iterative cycle that progressively better addresses communities' needs and interests. This will be compared to the normal dissemination where the

community-based trainers provide information to FFBS groups and facilitate discussions without the benefit of video training aids.

Video dissemination calendar

	FFBS Season	Intervention	Video content	Time frame for Production and Dissemination
1	Preseason	Gender	Daily clock /gendered division of labor	Production: June Dissemination: July - October
2	Preseason ; In season	Agriculture	Soil and Water management	Production: October - February Dissemination: March - October
3	Harvest	Markets	Determining cost of production	Production: June - July Dissemination: July - October
4	Preseason	Gender	HH decision making; Cash flow tree	Production: June Dissemination: July - October
5	Harvest	Markets	Marketing as a group and FFBS financing	Production: June Dissemination: July to October; Feb - May
6	Harvest	Nutrition	Establishment of backyard garden	Production: July - September Dissemination: September – November; March -May
7	Post harvest	Agriculture	Post-harvest management	Production: June - July Dissemination: August - March
8	Post harvest	Nutrition	Six food groups	Production: August Dissemination: September – Dec, March - July

d. Monitoring

Monitoring activities (illustrated in green in the results chain in Annex 2) will leverage Pathways' ongoing regular monitoring systems including: the Participatory Performance Tracker (PPT), gender Progress Market outcome monitoring, and Annual Review Study (ARS) monitoring systems. Additionally, the engagement will monitor outreach to identify the number of new community members (non-FFBS members) reached, as well as qualitative data on efficacy of the videos with both FFBS members and other community members. The objective of these monitoring activities will be to generate evidence about how this engagement contributes to the higher level outcomes outlined in the DLEC Theory of Change (see orange boxes in the results chain).

e. Outreach

DLEC will involve DAES staff in initial video dissemination, joint monitoring, and submit reports on DLEC's work to DAES, and will disseminate information about the engagement and the results generated through monitoring activities through a number of different forums including: a

stand-alone learning event; active participation in MAFAAS events; sharing lessons via DLEC's Community of Practice and other events including roundtables and USAID GLEE events; and documentation of learning via journal articles, conferences, etc.

IV. Contributions to Learning and to USAID Programming

The planned engagement will contribute to DLEC's learning agenda through providing evidence and learning to the EAS community in Malawi and around the world around comparing the efficacy of digital vs. analog integrated content including agricultural practices, nutrition practices, gender equity and women's empowerment, and market engagement. For the latter two domains, gender equity / women's empowerment and market engagement, the engagement will be piloting approaches to use of community-based video to provide this type of EAS. Examples of the type of content in these two domains which may be piloted through the use of community-based video include: gender dialogues around household decision making and the concept of "FFBS Financing" which adapts the VSLA model for producers groups to facilitate collective marketing activities, aggregation of inputs, and purchase of distressed sales of production from members immediately after harvest for storage and sale at a higher price

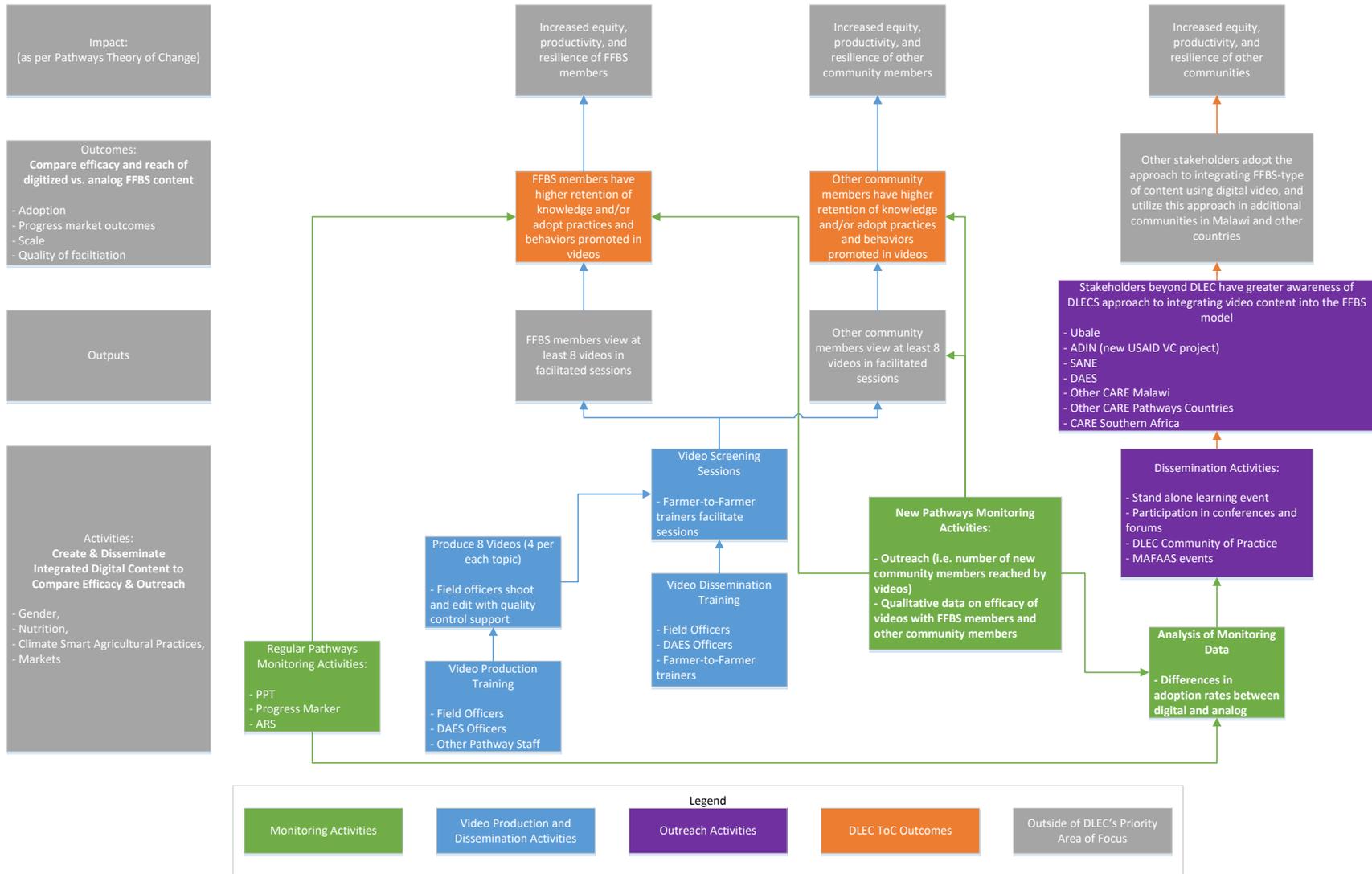
DLEC's experiences with and lessons learned from the engagement will be shared within Malawi with key EAS stakeholders through collaboration and events with MAFAAS and the USAID-funded SANE project. For USAID Malawi, this learning will provide opportunities with ongoing USAID programming in Malawi, including SANE as well as Ubale and AGA. CARE Malawi is an implementing partner on the latter two of these USAID initiatives, which will facilitate rapid dissemination and adoption of lessons learned from DLEC into these initiatives.

Additionally, the engagement will explicitly focus on influencing the EAS community outside of Malawi through a number of complementary approaches. CARE Malawi has been designated as the Regional Gender Learning Hub for CARE in Southern Africa, and DLEC will play an important role in promoting gender equity within EAS and agriculture more broadly through the region. Because Pathways is a global program implementing projects around the world, the engagement will also influence CARE's EAS related programming outside the region in countries as diverse as Mali, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Bangladesh. This includes other ongoing USAID programming such as the recently awarded Livelihoods for Resilience Activity (LRA) in Ethiopia on which CARE is partnering with Digital Green. Finally, the experiences and lessons learned through the engagement will be widely shared through DLEC's global community of practice.

Annexes

- A. Results Chain
- B. Work Plan
- C. Budget
- D. Budget notes

Annex A: Results Chain



Annex B: Work Plan

Start-Up and Year 1 Work Plan

Activities	Year 0		Year 1											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Decide on topics for 8 videos (2 per category) based on practices (3-5 key practices or "non-negotiables") captured in the PPT and Progress Marker monitoring systems														
Develop a concept note to describe the proposed pilot in detail for PMC and USAID including concept note, budget, budget notes, work plan timeline														
Selection of communities for the engagement														
Advertise for new position, interview, etc.														
Hire video production staff														
Procure video production equipment														
Procure video dissemination equipment														
Launch meeting to sensitize key stakeholders														
Video production training (5 days)														
Video dissemination training (3 days)														
Production of videos on														

Activities	Year 0		Year 1											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Markets														
Screening of videos on Markets														
Production of videos on Gender														
Screening of videos on Gender														
Production of videos on Nutrition														
Screening of videos on Nutrition														
Production of videos on Climate Change														
Screening of videos on Climate Change														
Quality assurance review by Digital Green														
Monitoring of adoption and reach														
Analysis of monitoring data														
Dissemination of results														
Stand-alone event in Malawi														
Participate in conference forums														
Launch of national extension census data														
DLEC Community of Practice														
Publications / Communications														
Reporting														

Year 2 Work Plan

Activities	Year 2											
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Screening of videos on Gender												
Production of videos on Nutrition												
Screening of videos on Nutrition												
Production of videos on Climate Change												
Screening of videos on Climate Change												
Production of videos on Markets												
Screening of videos on Markets												
Quality assurance review by Digital Green												
Monitoring of adoption and reach												
Analysis of monitoring data												
Dissemination of results												
Stand-alone event in Malawi												
Participate in conference forums												
Participate in MAFAAs Extension week				x								
DLEC Community of Practice												
Publications / Communications												
Reporting												

Annex C: Budget for DLEC Malawi Engagement

	Unit	Year 1			Year 2			Total
		Rate	Number	Amount	Rate	Number	Amount	
National Personnel								
Video Coordinator	Month	\$2,000	12	\$24,000	\$2,060	12	\$24,720	\$48,720
Program Director	Days	\$300	12	\$3,600	\$309	12	\$3,708	\$7,308
Program Manager	Days	\$300	48	\$14,400	\$309	48	\$14,832	\$29,232
M&E	Days	\$300	72	\$21,600	\$309	72	\$22,248	\$43,848
Field Officer Support	Days	\$170	240	\$40,800	\$175	240	\$42,024	\$82,824
Subtotal National Personnel				\$104,400			\$107,532	\$211,932
International Travel Costs								
Subtotal International Travel				\$0			\$0	\$0
Domestic Travel Costs								
Domestic Airfare (Malawi)	Trips	\$0		\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Per Diem (hotel, meals & incidentals) (Lilongwe)	Days	\$250	15	\$3,750	\$250	15	\$3,750	\$7,500
Per diem/accommodation (Other Malawi) - National Staff	Man Days	\$69	20	\$1,385	\$69	20	\$1,385	\$2,769
Subtotal Domestic Travel				\$5,135			\$5,135	\$10,269
Vehicle Rental								
Malawi vehicle rental	Days	100	35	\$3,500	103	35	3,605	\$7,105
Fuel(Malawi)	Days	200	35	\$7,000	\$206	35	\$7,210	\$14,210
Subtotal Vehicle				\$10,500			\$10,815	\$21,315
Innovations Fund								
Video production equipment (camera, accessories)	Lump sum	1,950	4	\$7,800				\$7,800
Laptop & external hard drive	Lump sum	1,500	2	\$3,000				\$3,000

Video dissemination equipment (projectors)	Lump sum	350	25	\$8,750				\$8,750
Video production training (5 days & 10 participants - DG staff and travel costs, venue rent, meals, accommodation)	One trip and event costs	7,788	1	\$9,900				\$9,900
Video dissemination training (3 days)	One trip and event costs	4,652	1	\$8,020				\$8,020
Quality assurance review (time covered by DG)	One Trip	3,744	32	\$119,808				\$119,808
Learning event (venue, facilitator, meals)	Lump sum				1,560	1	\$1,560	\$1,560
Communications / publications (flyers, brochures, promotional video, etc.)	Lump sum	500	1	\$500	1,500	1	\$1,500	\$2,000
MAFAAS Event Sponsorship	Lump sum				2,000	1	\$2,000	\$2,000
Subtotal Innovation Fund				\$157,778			\$5,060	162,838
Utilities(Malawi - Kasungu field office)								
Communication	Lump Sum	1200	0.75	\$900	1236	1	\$1,236	\$2,136
Water & Electricity	Lump Sum	600	0.75	\$450	618	1	\$618	\$1,068
Stationery	Lump Sum	960	0.75	\$720	988.8	1	\$989	\$1,709
Security	Lump Sum	600	0.75	\$450	618	1	\$618	\$1,068
Rent	Lump Sum	900	0.75	\$675	927	1	\$927	\$1,602
Sub total Malawi Utilities				\$3,195			\$4,388	\$7,583
Shared Project Costs								
Malawi	Lump Sum	\$30,911	1	\$30,911	\$14,622	1	\$14,622	\$45,533
Subtotal SPC				\$30,911			\$14,622	\$45,533
SUBTOTAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS				\$154,140			\$142,492	\$296,632
NICRA		11.66%		\$17,973			\$16,615	\$34,587
TOTAL COSTS				\$172,113			\$159,106	\$331,219

Annex D: Budget Notes for Malawi DLEC

National Personnel

- A new full time staff person will be hired to act as a video coordinator based in Lilongwe or Kasungu to lead the video production and dissemination activities with Field Officers. Additional LOE will be provided by existing Pathways project staff including technical and management support from the Program Director and Program Manager, M&E Support from the M&E Manager.

Travel

- Domestic travel to cover hotel and per diem for national staff.
- No international travel is included in the Malawi country engagement; necessary international travel will be covered from the core team budget.

Vehicle Rental and Fuel

- The rate in Malawi is 100USD per day. Lump sum projections based on approximate 35 days use per year. Fuel rate is based on 200USD per month in Malawi.

Innovation Fund

- Video production and dissemination equipment including cameras, projectors, and hard drives will be purchased. Rates are based on prevailing costs within Malawi.
- Costs for video production and dissemination trainings include venue rent, meals, travel and accommodation costs for participants and Digital Green staff. Digital Green staff time will be covered by Digital Green directly.
- The engagement budget will cover costs for travel, per diem, and accommodation costs for Digital Green staff engaged in quality assurance. Digital Green staff time will be covered by Digital Green directly.
- Dissemination costs budgeted for include allowances, transportation, meals, and venue rental for a DLEC Malawi learning event, communications costs, and sponsorship of a MAFAAS event.

Utilities

- Calculation based on lump sum projection with the first year projected to be 9 months and subsequent years based on 12months.

Shared Program Costs

We also budgeted for the shared costs of operating the Country Office headquarters in Malawi allocable to this project. Shared costs are Country Office costs necessary for CARE's implementation of project activities to provide the most efficient support to achieve program objectives. Examples of this type of cost are personnel costs such as the Country Director's and Assistant Country Director's time and other administrative positions (Human Resources, Finance, Procurement etc.), operations cost of the main office, cost of providing other general administrative services, etc.

Shared costs are collected into one or more cost pools then distributed to projects. The distribution is based on a methodology defined to provide a fair allocation to the projects supported by the cost elements. The allocation is documented, regularly audited and approved by the country office senior management. The allocated costs, per CARE's global policy, are treated as direct costs and are not included in CARE's indirect costs.

Indirect Costs

CARE's cognizant agency is USAID. The provisional rate of 11.66% (Total overhead 7.29% and A-133 audit rate of 4.37%) has been applied to the total direct costs as per the approved NICRA.