



BASELINE EVALUATION OF
COOPERATIVE
DEVELOPMENT-4
(CD4)

LAND O'LAKES INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

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Disclaimer

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CD4	Cooperative Development Activity -4
CLP	Cooperative Learning Platform
CREMPA	Central Region Milk Producers Association
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FUM	Farmers Union of Malawi
HIMACUL	Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited
HOFACOL	Horticultural Farmer's Cooperative Society
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MUSCCO	Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives
NCCR	National Cooperatives Confederation of Rwanda
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RWF	Rwandan Franc
TANGO	Technical Assistance for NGOs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar

1. Executive Summary

Background. USAID Cooperative Development Program (CD4) aims to advance cooperatives in Rwanda and Malawi through improving the cooperative enabling environment, business performance, and development community support for cooperatives. This United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded activity is designed to directly support 30 cooperatives, 7 apex organizations, and 3,000 cooperative members in Rwanda and Malawi between August 15, 2018 and August 14, 2023. TANGO International will be engaged throughout CD4 to conduct baseline, midterm, and final evaluations, including monitoring and learning support activities at each of these project stages. This report is primarily targeted toward Land O'Lakes and CD4 activity staff and can be used as a resource to inform reporting to USAID and other CD4 stakeholders. The activity is currently in its start-up phase and this report describes the results of the qualitative baseline activities.

Methods. All baseline evaluation activities included in this report took place from January – April 2019 and focus on understanding apex and other cooperative support organizations in Rwanda and Malawi. Rwanda fieldwork took place 5 February – 20 February 2019. Malawi fieldwork took place 3 April – 5 April 2019. Fieldwork in Rwanda focused on capturing qualitative data from primary cooperative members via Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interview's (KIIs). Field work in Malawi focused on KIIs; FGDs were not conducted. Scorecard and Learning Agenda workshops were conducted in both Rwanda and Malawi. The scorecard provides a tool to measure higher-level outcome indicators for CD4 objectives 1 and 3, which focus on change at the systems level over the course of CD4 implementation. The same scorecards that were developed during this baseline workshop will be utilized for scoring workshops facilitated by TANGO during the midterm and endline evaluations to measure growth in the cooperative enabling environment. The learning agendas for Rwanda and Malawi were developed during an in-country workshop.

Main Findings: Rwanda. The cooperative sector in Rwanda is overall well established and supported at the national level. This has resulted in a strong cooperative sector, on the verge of engaging with national and international markets at a larger scale. Cooperatives are familiar entities and many Rwandans are involved in a cooperative of some kind. CD4 activities in Rwanda will include dairy, maize, and horticulture cooperatives.

Interview participants cited reasons for cooperative membership in these sectors to be (1) government encouragement to join cooperatives, (2) desire for more steady payments for marketed commodities and (3) to have access to cooperative services. In addition to collective sales, the most consistently cited service that cooperative members access as a result of membership are interest-free loans. Overall, cooperative members seemed satisfied with the services provided by their primary cooperatives. FGDs found that cooperative members are satisfied with their cooperative leadership and governance system(s) and believe it fairly addresses member concerns. To maintain financial records, most cooperatives hire accountants, who are paid out of membership fees. These hired accountants aren't necessarily members of the cooperative(s) but work with the elected leaders to establish and maintain financial records and profit and loss statements to submit to the Rwandan national government. The primary challenges reported in interviews with cooperative members and leadership are delayed loan repayments and delayed payments from buyers.

The three services that were cited as union services for all three value chains, includes advocacy, price setting, and conflict resolution. Advocacy in terms of fixing prices and negotiating prices with buyers, was cited as the main union service, followed by bulk buying of inputs. Interviews with union leadership show that bulk buying of inputs

is a possible service that could be increased with additional union revenue. Although this is promising the services unions are currently able to provide are limited, largely due to a lack of adequate funds.

Main Findings: Malawi. TANGO activities in Malawi focused on assessing the overall conditions of the cooperative sector and current status of apex organizations within the sector. Specific cooperatives and value chains to receive CD4 activity support were not yet selected at the time of this baseline evaluation. Malawi has a relatively newer cooperative sector, and overall, interviews indicate that there is a wide range of variation in the capacities and performance of cooperatives in the agricultural sector. Over the past 20 years, formation and strengthening of agricultural cooperatives in Malawi has been largely donor driven, which has limited long-term sustainable growth for the sector. Furthermore, interviews indicate a common perception that the purpose of cooperatives is not primarily business-related, but rather that cooperatives serve a social function. There is a reported lack of understanding of the purpose of cooperatives as business entities, i.e., entities that are intended to provide economic benefits to their members.

Apex organizations (which include associations, unions, and federations) in Malawi appear to be actively engaged in providing a range of services to their member cooperatives. In addition to providing a structure for collective marketing of members' products, which is the main service cited, interviews show that some primary cooperatives also provide members with access to inputs and other services, including providing access to credit and extension services. There are several challenges stakeholders report to be impacting the cooperative sector in Malawi, including a dependence on external assistance, low literacy levels, tedious registration process, poor infrastructure and a lack of coordination among apex bodies.

Conclusions and Recommendations. Conclusions at this baseline stage focus on recommendations for (1) CD4 activity implementation and (2) the CD4 monitoring, evaluation and research methodology.

CD4 activities are appropriately designed to address ongoing gaps in the Rwanda and Malawi cooperative sectors. In both countries, apex bodies are in need of additional support and capacity building, in alignment with the CD4 activity theory of change.

In Rwanda, the capacity and role of unions in the cooperative sector needs to be strengthened. Unions are in need of additional monetary support from members in order to provide additional services. As the majority of cooperatives are not experiencing or expecting significant support from unions, the evaluation team finds that cooperative members generally do not highly value the union at this stage. CD4 can support unions in developing a business case (value proposition) for unions to explain to cooperatives how much it will cost for the union to provide identified services, and what the benefit(s) are to the cooperative. Unions then need to communicate this to cooperatives. CD4 can provide support to unions to (1) identify member needs, (2) develop methodology for union workplan to address those needs, and (3) develop a business case (justification) to their members for what capacity and resources are needed in order to address cooperative needs.

In Malawi, Land O'Lakes and CD4 activities have significant opportunities, as apex bodies already exist in the agricultural sector (often formed with the support of external projects), but still require additional technical support to become fully functioning organizations that are capable of sustaining their operations only from the services they provide to their members.

Activity Implementation

1. CD4 should develop a strategy to focus technical support to unions based on the key needs of cooperatives identified through this baseline evaluation. These needs include: buyer identification, price negotiation, bulk buying of inputs, assistance with transportation, training on financial and cooperative management.
2. In Rwanda, the evaluation team recommends that the CD4 staff develop a strategy to effectively integrate unions when CD4 staff are working directly with cooperatives. This would improve the unions' capacities to replicate CD4 support to cooperatives that are not being directly supported by the CD4 activity.
3. In Malawi, Land O'Lakes is still in the process of selecting cooperatives and value chains to be included in CD4 activities. It is recommended that Land O'Lakes selects value chains with an existing apex organization structure already in place but in need of further support.
4. CD4 should utilize learning from CD3 activities and the Cooperative Learning Platform implemented in Rwanda to positively impact coordination of apex bodies in Malawi. An important step in this process would be to collaborate with the cooperative sector stakeholders to formalize an updated institutional analysis/stakeholder mapping of the cooperative sector.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Methodology

5. Decisions and recommendations made in the monitoring and evaluation workshop(s), have implications for the implementation of the M&E system. CD4 staff need to ensure the additional registration questions identified during the monitoring and evaluation workshop are integrated into the PM2 tool, and the IMPACTS database includes all necessary information to measure activity indicators.
6. CD4 staff should assess unions to verify if identified needs are the same across all their member cooperatives. This assessment exercise presents an opportunity for CD4 activities to support unions in designing strategies to effectively reach out to their members and prioritize addressing identified needs based on union capacity.
7. It will be necessary to include cooperatives not directly supported by CD4 as well as CD4-supported cooperatives within CD4-supported unions in fieldwork activities during the midterm and final evaluations. To assess whether the CD4 support to unions has strengthened performance of all member cooperatives, it will be important to assess cooperatives that have not received direct CD4 support.
8. It is recommended for CD4 to continue investing in detailed gender studies, particularly to repeat at endline. Overall evaluations have limitations in deeply evaluating gender dynamics within constrained timeframes. Ensuring a gender analysis similar to that conducted at baseline is repeated at endline (and midterm, if financially feasible), is recommended.

2. Background

2.1. Program Description

Land O'Lakes International Development (Land O'Lakes) Cooperative Development Activity 4 (CD4) aims to advance cooperatives in Rwanda and Malawi between August 15, 2018 and August 14, 2023. This United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded CD4 activity is designed to directly support 30 cooperatives, 7 apex organizations, and 3,000 cooperative members in Rwanda and Malawi.¹ Land O'Lakes will reach the goal of advancing cooperatives in Rwanda and Malawi by:

- I. **improving the cooperative enabling environment** through capacity building of apex organizations;
- II. **improving cooperative business performance** by providing technical assistance to primary cooperatives directly and through apex organizations; and
- III. **improving development community support for cooperatives** by conducting research on locally-defined learning agenda questions and disseminating learning through local and global channels to improve implementation of CD4 and other cooperative development programs.

Through technical assistance from Land O'Lakes, Inc., investments from apex organizations, cooperatives, local universities, and other development activities, it is expected that \$1.5 million in cost share will be generated through CD4-related activities.² Land O'Lakes will provide technical support to both apex organizations and primary cooperatives, to transition the existing cooperative learning platform (CLP) to local ownership, and strengthen cooperatives business performance.³

This process is illustrated in the CD4 results framework, figure I below.

¹ Land O'Lakes International COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CD4) BASELINE, MIDTERM, AND FINAL EVALUATION SCOPE

² *ibid*

³ Cooperative Development Activity 4 Fact Sheet. USAID. Land O'Lakes International Development

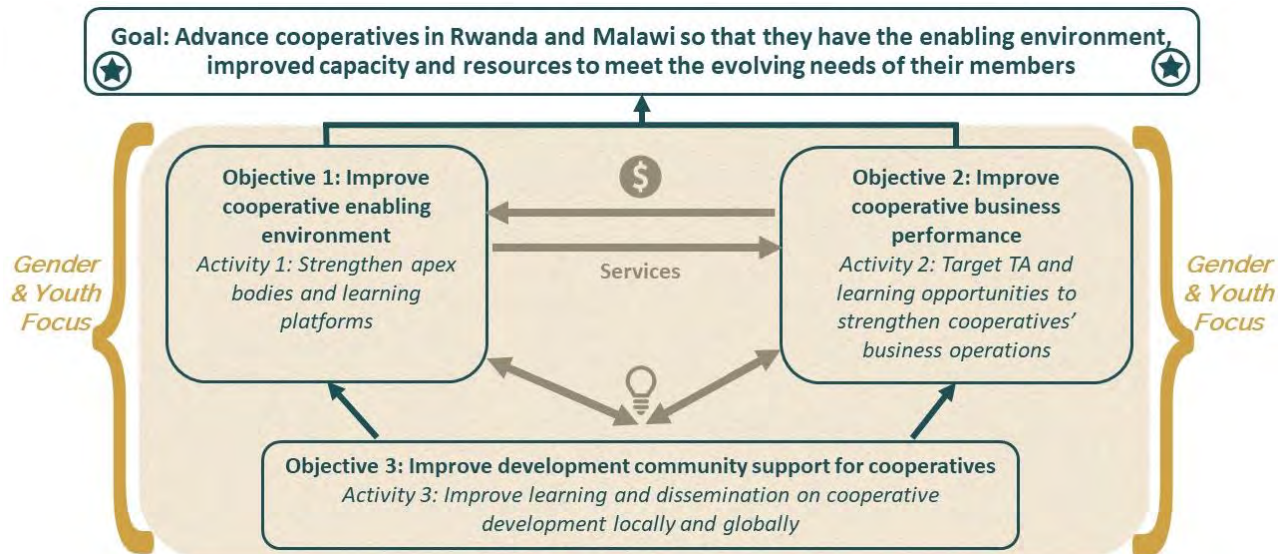


Figure 1: CD4 Results Framework⁴

2.2. Purpose of Baseline Evaluation

TANGO International will be engaged throughout CD4 to conduct baseline, midterm, and final evaluations, including monitoring and learning support activities at each of these three project stages. Currently, the activity is in its start-up phase and this report describes the results of the qualitative baseline activities. This report is primarily targeted toward Land O'Lakes and CD4 activity staff and can be used as a resource to inform reporting to USAID and other CD4 stakeholders.

All baseline evaluation activities included in this report took place from January – April 2019 and focus on understanding apex and other cooperative support organizations in the Rwanda and Malawi context. During this period, TANGO worked with CD4 colleagues to develop and implement an evaluation approach for the activity. This included developing a set of qualitative tools to collect information from farmers, primary cooperatives, apex bodies and sector stakeholders. TANGO then applied these tools to understand the change pathways, and associated risks and assumptions that could have implications for implementation planning. An internal quantitative monitoring baseline will be finalized in July 2019. This internal baseline focused on assessing the capacity of each individual cooperative and perceptions of its members. TANGO developed the tools to be used for the internal baseline, to be administered by Land O'Lakes staff.

The overall activity evaluation questions were used to inform the monitoring and evaluation system and tool design. The three key evaluation questions are as follows:

⁴ CD4 Results Framework, Cooperative Development Activity 4. Cooperative Agreement No. 7200AA18CA00024. Year I Work Plan: August 15, 2018 – August 14, 2019. November 30, 2018.

- I. To what extent are program-supported apex bodies better able to meet the evolving needs of their members?
- II. To what extent has the business performance of program-supported apex bodies and primary cooperatives improved?
- III. To what extent has program-supported learning and dissemination impacted cooperatives and the cooperative development community support of cooperatives?⁵

3. Methodology and Implementation

In general, the same procedures and tools were utilized in both Rwanda and Malawi. Malawi activities consisted of a lighter, carry-over approach, which incorporated lessons learned and adaptations, as necessary, based on Rwanda fieldwork.

Specific TANGO activities included document review, development and refinement of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methodology and data collection tools, baseline qualitative data collection, presentation of preliminary findings and proposed M&E system, facilitation of scoring and learning agenda workshops, data entry, analysis and reporting.

3.1. Fieldwork

Rwanda fieldwork took place from 5 February – 20 February 2019. Malawi fieldwork took place 3 April – 5 April 2019. Fieldwork in Rwanda focused on capturing qualitative data from primary cooperative members via Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interview's (KIIs). Field work in Malawi focused on KIIs; FGDs were not conducted. Due to the nascent stage of Malawi programming, selection of focus value chains and participating cooperatives had not yet been completed at the time of this evaluation, which made interviewing cooperative members not possible. To ensure the perspective of cooperative members was still included in this baseline evaluation, KIIs were conducted with cooperative members, as discussed below.

All interviews were conducted using the topical outline included in Annex 8.4, and covered topics such as types of activities provided by the cooperative and union, awareness of apex bodies, benefits of participation, decision making processes, challenges, and recommendations/expectations for the CD4 activity. KIIs also explored research themes to be included in the learning agenda. All FGDs and KIIs were conducted through two-person teams, with one TANGO facilitator and one national consultant as interpreter and note taker in each session. The fieldwork schedule for Rwanda is included in appendix 7.10 and for Malawi in appendix 7.11.

Consent. The interview facilitator began each session by clearly explaining the purpose of the evaluation and participation is voluntary and that information will not be attributed to individuals before confirming oral consent to proceed with the interview.

⁵ Land O'Lakes International COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CD4) BASELINE, MIDTERM, AND FINAL EVALUATION
Scope of Work

Focus Group Discussions. The identification of FGD participants was led by CD4 staff in collaboration with cooperative leaders. FGDs consisted of 6-8 cooperative members. Each FGD lasted no more than 90 minutes, and were semi-structured, following the topical outline included in Annex 8.4.

In Rwanda seven FGDs were completed: three with dairy cooperatives, three with maize cooperatives, and one with a horticulture cooperative. The breakdown of FGD participants is included in Table 1. Zero FGDs were conducted in Malawi because participating cooperatives had not yet been selected.

Table 1: Focus Group Discussions Conducted

	Rwanda	Malawi
Number of FGDs	7	0
Men	28	0
Women	27	0
Total Individuals	55	0

Key Informant Interviews. KIIs were conducted through in-person meetings with employees of Land O' Lakes, activity partners, donors, government organizations and other stakeholders. Each KII lasted a maximum of one hour and also followed the topical outline included in Annex 8.4. A list of key informant interviews is included in appendix 7.9 of this report.

In Rwanda, 11 KIIs were completed. KIIs were primarily conducted with cooperative and union presidents, accountants and secretaries. One KII was also completed with a representative from one apex body: the National Cooperatives Confederation of Rwanda (NCCR). In Malawi, nine key informant interviews were conducted. Only one interview was conducted with cooperative a manager representing the Horticulture Cooperative Farmers of Lilongwe. The majority of KIIs in Malawi were organized with cooperative sector project representatives, government representatives and apex bodies, including the Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited, the Land O'Lakes MSIKA project, Central Region Milk Producers Association, Farmers Union of Malawi, Malawi Milk Producers Association, Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives, and the Ministry of Industry Tourism and Trade. The breakdown of completed KIIs can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Key Informant Interviews Conducted

	Rwanda	Malawi
Number of KIIs	11	9
Men	12	11
Women	5	2
Total Individuals	17	13

Data Capture. Qualitative data was captured through hand-written notes. Interview notes synthesized key points related to topics and sub topics. The qualitative team used an excel-based data matrix for structured triangulation between and within the FGD and KII data sets. This results framework is included in Annex 8.1.

3.2. Scorecard

The scorecard activity was designed to utilize cooperative sector stakeholder's knowledge, experience, and expertise to gain a better understanding of how the cooperative enabling environment [objective 1] and broader

support to the cooperative sector [objective 3] are changing. The scorecard activity will be repeated at midterm and endline, which will improve understanding of how the CD4 project is contributing to those changes, and what can be done to strengthen this project contribution.

The initial CD4 design did not include higher-level outcome indicators for CD4 objectives one and three that measure change at the systems level. There was also no objective measure of the combined results of project activities toward achieving these objectives. The scorecard activity provides a tool to measure this change over the course of CD4 implementation.

The scorecard activity measures change in a cooperative enabling environment to assess CD4 progress toward achieving CD4 objective one and to help answer evaluation question 1:

- Objective 1: improve cooperative enabling environment.
- Evaluation question 1: to what extent are activity-supported apex bodies better able to meet the evolving needs of their members?

The scorecard activity measures change in a development community support indicator to assess CD4 progress towards achieving CD4 objective three and to help answer evaluation question 3:

- Objective 3: improve development community support for cooperatives.
- Evaluation question 3: to what extent has activity-supported learning and dissemination impacted cooperatives and the cooperative development community's support of cooperatives?

Table 3: Outcome Indicators Addressed in Rwanda and Malawi Scorecards

Obj.	Proposed outcome level indicators ⁶	Type of indicator	Level of data collection	Data collection instrument
1	Level of cooperative sector capacity in Rwanda/Malawi to support cooperative development	Qualitative	Cooperative sector level	Scorecard 1
3	Level of support provided to cooperative development in Rwanda/Malawi by the national and international development community	Qualitative	National and international level	Scorecard 2

⁶ Indicator reference sheets are optional and can be developed by the CD4 team if more specificity on proposed indicators is required than is provided by the scorecards. For non-required indicators like the ones proposed here and to keep the activity low effort and user-friendly, indicator reference sheets are not essential.

The scorecards for Rwanda and Malawi were completed during one-day in-country workshops. The workshop in Malawi was shorter due to process efficiency learning from Rwanda.

The scorecard workshop methodology was similar in Rwanda and Malawi. The workshops were led by TANGO International staff. TANGO’s national consultants provided interpretation and facilitation support during the workshops, which allowed for full participation of all stakeholders. The participating stakeholders were selected and invited by Land O’Lakes CD4 staff. Land O’Lakes CD4 staff did not participate in the scorecard exercises to ensure an unbiased scoring of the cooperative sector without CD4 input. The list of participants is included in appendix 7.5 for Rwanda and 7.8 for Malawi.

The workshop began with an overview of the CD4 activities and objectives. The participants were presented with the scorecards, and an explanation of each component. The agenda for the workshop in Rwanda is included in appendix 7.2, and for Malawi in appendix 7.7. To create the scorecards, stakeholders first identified measurable elements under each topic. These elements can be thought of as indicators for the two objectives covered in the scorecards. Stakeholders were asked to consider each of the two scorecard topics and identify what measurable elements can be used to answer the evaluation questions derived from CD4 objectives one and three.

Topic One identified elements included: access to information and knowledge sharing; policy and laws governing cooperatives are set; and governance (leadership) and structured management in terms of paid staff, structure of union, federation.

Topic Two identified elements included: government financial support to cooperative sector (investments in supporting infrastructure, extension services, subsidies on inputs for cooperatives, etc.; trainings, field visits, information sharing (provided by external actors); market linkages; access to finance; donations, grants provided to cooperatives from government, NGOs, etc.

To create the scorecards at baseline, participants completed six steps, listed below.

1. Consider what your vision is for an ideal, well-functioning cooperative sector.
2. Identify a specific, measurable element within the cooperative sector, relating to the topic.
3. Determine the worst case and best-case vision for this element.
4. Identify what sources of evidence could be used.
5. Score the current cooperative sector on a scale of 0 – 10.
6. Write a justification explaining why, based on the evidence, the score was selected.

Table 4, below, shows the components of the scorecard, and under each heading gives a definition of what is included in each column of the scorecard.

Table 4: Scorecard Component Definitions

Elements	Level 0 (worst case)	Level 10 (optimal)	Evidence	Score	Justification
Elements are identified specific, measurable, and important components of the	Here participants defined the lowest possible score criteria, or the worst-case scenario for the	Here participants defined the highest possible score criteria, describing the optimal scenario	Evidence is the kinds of information that should be taken into consideration when determining the score for the element. In this way, the score is not only a subjective measure,	Here participants determine where the element of the current cooperative sector ranks on a score of 0 to 10,	Here is an explanation of the score, in the form of a list of reasons why the score was deemed appropriate based

cooperative sector.	identified element.	for the identified element.	but grounded in a shared understanding of what kinds of evidence would support a score.	based on the 0 and 10 defined values and evidence.	on all of the criteria presented in the scorecard.
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The worst- and best-case scenario for each element were used to define the highest (10) and lowest (0) values on each scorecard. The next step was to identify evidence that could be used as a basis for objective measurement of each change described for each scorecard value. The purpose of this was to ensure that all stakeholders in this workshop and future workshops will be using the same criteria and evidence on which to base their scoring. Finally, the stakeholders applied the scorecard to determine the current (baseline) status of the cooperative sector per identified element. For most elements, the stakeholders came to consensus of what score to give each element, however, in the cases strong disagreement prevented consensus, an average score was recorded. For each element, workshop facilitators recorded the justification for the assigned scoring value, including reference to the objective evidence. Section 4.2 presents the scorecard results for Rwanda. Section 5.2 presents the scorecard results for Malawi.

The same scorecards that were developed during this baseline workshop will be utilized for scoring workshops facilitated by TANGO during the midterm and endline evaluations to measure growth in the cooperative enabling environment.

3.3. Learning Agenda

Preliminary research questions for the learning agendas in Rwanda and Malawi were developed during half-day in-country workshops. Stakeholders involved in the cooperative sector were identified and invited by CD4 staff. The final learning agendas, which will be the result of the workshops and subsequent stakeholder review processes, will be used to inform CD4-funded research. For the learning agenda workshops, Land O’Lakes CD4 staff were involved in session activities.

In Rwanda, the workshop began with an overview of the CD4 design and objectives. TANGO presented six proposed themes and invited stakeholders to propose additional themes. 14 total themes were identified. Stakeholders then broke into four groups, each facilitated by a CD4 staff to draft research questions. Each CD4 staff recorded the proposed research questions in English on a shared Google document. This allowed TANGO to follow the progress of each group without requiring constant interpretation. That Google document was then projected to all participants for review in plenary. Through facilitated discussion participants refined and agreed on all drafted proposed research questions. The agenda for this workshop can be seen in appendix 7.3.

In Malawi, the learning agenda workshop took place on the same day as the scorecard workshop. No further introduction of the CD4 activity was required. The learning agenda sessions followed the morning’s scoring sessions, which allowed TANGO and participating stakeholders to use the scorecard elements as the basis for the learning agenda themes. The entirety of the learning agenda sessions in Malawi were conducted in plenary. The agenda for this workshop can be found in appendix 7.7.

After the workshop, the draft learning agenda was sent to all participating stakeholders for a two-week review period during which additional feedback or edits could be submitted to TANGO. The draft learning agenda result for Rwanda is presented in section 4.3. The learning agenda results for Malawi are discussed in section 5.3.

3.4. Social Capital

Social capital will be measured using a social capital and perceptions quantitative survey. “Social capital is the capital of cooperation, joint action, mutual trust, and mutual assistance, which are formed in the course of economic relations between individuals social capital is most often regarded as the ability of social structures and attitudes that support them to increase the effectiveness of collective action. The social capital is a connective tissue, a glue that helps people to use available resources for creating mutual benefits.”⁷ Social capital is defined more simply by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as “networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups”.⁸ Cooperatives are formal social networks. Social capital under the CD4 activity specifically focuses on the cooperative system and is the primary point of investigation for the social capital and perceptions survey tool. The tool is designed to inform three domains of interests. Each of these domains is important to the overall success of the cooperative and has social capital components embedded within it.

1. **Perceived value.** Members perceived value of their cooperative structures (primary cooperative and union/federation bodies) and leadership is important information to inform program activities and strategy. In addition, it can be hypothesized that the higher the perceived value, the more willing farmers will be to invest their time and resources into the cooperative.⁹ The social capital and perceptions survey measures members’ perceptions of their cooperative, union, and federation. In this section, the survey asks respondents which services are provided by each level, and how well that service is provided.
2. **Behavior Domains.** Behavior domains represent how members perception of the cooperatives impact their willingness to engage in cooperation, competition, business strategy, and decision making. The behavior domains capture trust between members, and across the vertical cooperative bodies. Trust is a key element of social capital, and it is under this behavior domain that bridging ties between members is assessed.¹⁰ The purpose of the behavior domains section in the social capital and perceptions survey is to capture information associated with cooperative systems cooperation, competition, business strategy, and decision-making processes. In this section for example, questions include: How often do you feel you have a voice in your primary cooperative’s decision making? How confident are you that your primary cooperative leadership has the knowledge and experience to manage the primary cooperative?
3. **Structural Domains.** Structural domains represent how farmer members’ perceptions of the cooperatives impact their own willingness to engage in connectivity, diversity, governance, and overall rule of law. Structural domains include bonding, bridging, and linking social capital at the cooperative level. Bonding is represented by strong connections between members. Bridging is represented by strong

⁷Cvetanovic, Slobodan & Despotovic, Danijela & Filipovic, Milorad. (2015). The concept of social capital in economic theory. *Ekonomika*. 61. 73-84. 10.5937/ekonomika1501073C.

⁸ OECD Insights. 2007. <https://www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf>

⁹Cvetanovic, Slobodan & Despotovic, Danijela & Filipovic, Milorad. (2015). The concept of social capital in economic theory. *Ekonomika*. 61. 73-84. 10.5937/ekonomika1501073C.

¹⁰Cvetanovic, Slobodan & Despotovic, Danijela & Filipovic, Milorad. (2015). The concept of social capital in economic theory. *Ekonomika*. 61. 73-84. 10.5937/ekonomika1501073C.

connections between members and primary cooperative leadership. Linking is represented by strong connections between members and union/federation leadership, and it is through this domain that linking social capital between cooperatives and unions, apex bodies, is assessed.¹¹ The purpose in the structural domains section in the social capital and perceptions survey is to capture information on the cooperative systems connectivity, diversity, governance, and rule of law. In this section, for example, questions include: How frequently do you engage with other primary cooperative members? Are by-laws/rules enforced?

Data on each of these domains will be collected by Land O'Lakes CD4 staff as part of their monitoring activities. The survey will be administered to a sample of CD4 participants and take roughly 20 minutes (maximum 45 minutes) to complete. This survey will also capture respondents' perceptions of the role and usefulness of the cooperative, union, and apex bodies. This will allow CD4 staff and the evaluation team to evaluate the impact of the CD4 activity on social capital as well as how the perceptions of the union and apex bodies after five years of support may change. It is recommended that both CD4-supported cooperative members and non-CD4-supported cooperative members are included in the survey at midterm and endline to compare changes in perceptions and social capital between the two groups. CD4-supported cooperative members are expected to have higher social capital than non-CD4-supported cooperative members.

3.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop

A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) workshop took place during baseline fieldwork. The workshop allowed CD4 staff and TANGO International to review the monitoring and evaluation design for CD4 and collaborate on final decisions regarding indicators, timing, and tools.

A review of monitoring indicators led to revision of eight indicators. The revised indicator table is included in appendix 7.1. All monitoring tools were reviewed using the updated indicators. Table 5, below, illustrates all the tools included in the CD4 monitoring and evaluation system.

Table 5: CD4 Monitoring and Evaluation System Tools

Type	Tool Name	Tool Type	Participant	Administered
Monitoring Tools	Social Capital and Perceptions Survey	Quantitative Survey	Sample of cooperative farmer members.	Land O'Lakes
	PM2	Registration and Financial Indicators. Monitoring Data.	Coop and Union leaders.	Land O'Lakes
Evaluation Tools	Focus Group Discussion Topical Outline	Topical Outline	Cooperative farmer members, as identified by CD4 staff.	TANGO
	Key Informant Topical Outline	Topical Outline	Primary coop and Apex body leaders, members, and other stakeholders.	TANGO

¹¹Cvetanovic, Slobodan & Despotovic, Danijela & Filipovic, Milorad. (2015). The concept of social capital in economic theory. *Ekonomika*. 61. 73-84. 10.5937/ekonomika1501073C.

	Scorecard	Scorecard	Stakeholders (CLP steering committee plus others)	TANGO
	Learning Agenda	Learning Agenda	Stakeholders (CLP steering committee plus others)	TANGO

The monitoring and evaluation workshop reviewed the timing of life of activity evaluation activities TANGO will complete and determined optimal timing of activities for both evaluative and monitoring activities. This is illustrated in Figure 2, below.

Figure 2: CD4 Timing of Monitoring and Evaluation Activities



4. Rwanda Results and Findings

4.1. Cooperatives

Focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with cooperative members, leaders, and accountants. The evaluation team found that all dairy, horticulture, and maize cooperatives included in CD4 activities are established and functioning cooperatives. All have been formally registered for several years, have elected leaders in place, and have regular meetings.

Membership. The majority of FGD participants had been members of their cooperatives for several years. Interview participants cited reasons for membership to be (1) government encouragement to join cooperatives, (2) desire for more steady payments for marketed commodities and (3) to have access to cooperative services. Cooperative members pay a membership fee, the amount of which varies amongst cooperatives. In most cases, cooperative membership fees are paid once at the time of membership. Cooperative farmer members reported

that this one-time membership fee is 10,000 Rwandan Francs (RWF), or \$11.05 USD.¹² In one instance, in the ██████████ District, cooperative members reported that there is an additional 1,000 RWF (\$1.10 USD) monthly fee. Land O'Lakes CD4 staff independently collected membership fee data from all cooperatives participating in CD4 activities, and found that for ██████████ cooperatives membership fees range from 12,000 RWF (\$13.26 USD) to 60,000 RWF (\$66.30 USD). For ██████████ cooperatives membership fees ranged from 30,000 RWF (\$33.15 USD) to 60,000 RWF (\$66.30 USD). ██████████ cooperatives membership fees ranged from 26,000 RWF (\$28.73 USD) to 150,000 RWF (\$165.75 USD). This averages to a membership fee of 49,583 RWF (\$54.79 USD). A table including all cooperative membership fees can be found in appendix 7.12.

Cooperatives pay membership fees to the Union. This is also a one-time membership fee, and the fee amount is at the discretion of the union general assembly. In the ██████████ district, interviews with union leadership found that initially the fee was 150,000 RWF (\$165.75 USD), however this has increased to 195,000 RWF (\$215.47 USD). Land O'Lakes staff independently collected membership fee data from CD4 participating unions and found that the ██████████ union membership fee is 100,000 RWF (\$110.50 USD), ██████████ 300,000 RWF (\$331.49 USD), and ██████████ 250,000 RWF (\$276.24 USD). In a Kill the union representative reported that there is no additional monthly fee for cooperatives to maintain membership of the union, however, there are occasionally requests for “contributions” to cover the costs of specific activities.

Cooperative Services Provided. Cooperative members reported many services provided as a result of membership. This is illustrated in Table 5, below.

Table 6: Reported Service Utilization by Cooperatives by Sector

Service Provided	Maize	Dairy	Horticulture
Veterinary Officer, Services, Drugs		X	
Interest free loans	X	X	X
Timely payment to farmers for products sold via cooperative	X	X	X
Identification of buyers, access to market(s), and collective selling	X	X	X
Artificial Insemination for Dairy Cows		X	
Training on milk testing		X	
Shops of foodstuffs and other home goods that can be purchased on credit	X	X	
Access to inputs, seeds, fertilizers	X		X

In addition to collective sales, the most consistently cited service that cooperative members access are interest-free loans. The services cooperative members cited were incorporated into the social capital and perceptions survey, which will collect data on services offered and accessed by cooperative members in greater detail.

Cooperative leaders are also cited as providing some advocacy on behalf of the cooperative members to the union level, although not beyond. One of the reported responsibilities of cooperative leadership is to maintain contact

¹² All conversations from Rwandan Francs to United States Dollars was completed using the exchange rate 1 Rwandan franc equals 0.0011 United States Dollar, May 29, 9:21 PM UTC.

with the union. KIs with cooperative leaders found that this is often difficult, due to the lack of consistency and availability of union representatives.

Services Needed. Overall, cooperative members seemed satisfied with the services provided by their primary cooperatives. The social capital and perceptions survey, which will be administered later this year, will collect data that will allow an analysis of comparative satisfaction of different services and between the three value chains. Dairy cooperatives that did not already have one, requested full-time veterinary services. Interviews showed that increasing access to reliable transportation for products or having cooperatives that would be able to provide transportation for milk, maize or vegetable products to markets and buyers is an increasing need as cooperatives grow and increase production. In one dairy cooperative, members reported that during the rainy season the road often becomes too muddy for the buyer to navigate. This leads to several days in which the buyer does not come to collect milk from the storage tanks and causes significant losses for the farmers. Although the road networks in Rwanda are largely of high quality, this is still a reported challenge for cooperative members.

Union services. The three services that were cited as union services in the majority of FGDs for all three value chains, includes (1) advocacy, (2) price setting, and (3) conflict resolution. Advocacy and price setting are done at regional and national levels. Advocacy in terms of fixing prices and negotiating prices with buyers, was cited as the primary union service in the majority of FGDs with cooperative members. This advocacy is largely focused on ensuring fair prices. Unions are involved in minimum price setting and participate in that process along with government entities and private businesses. Although union representatives are included in price setting meetings, which take place roughly once a year, interviews with union leaders found that the union does not have as much of a voice in these negotiations as business owners or government officials.

A majority of FGDs reported conflict resolution as a service provided by the union. The union has reportedly intervened in conflicts both between cooperatives, which is reported to be mainly due to boundary issues for membership and grazing purposes. FGDs also reported instances in which the union provided conflict management between members and leadership within one cooperative, although this is rare as cooperative members are largely satisfied with their internal governance structures. FGDs with cooperative members found that there are instances in which unions assist cooperatives in accessing bulk inputs (improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides) which allows cooperative members to access these at lower prices. Interviews with union leadership show that bulk buying of inputs is a possible service that could be increased with additional union revenue.

Two different interviews with cooperative leaders found that the union also links cooperatives to regional governmental entities and NGOs. This has led to various additional services to cooperatives, for example in one horticulture cooperative a union-facilitated NGO collaboration led to the provision of one goat for each cooperative member. In another cooperative, a linkage with the government led to a technical training on improved farming practices.

Although this is promising, the services unions are currently able to provide are limited. This is largely due to a lack of adequate funds. All interviews conducted with union leadership found that unions would like to provide more services for their member cooperatives but lack financial and staff capacity to do so. FGDs in two different cooperatives found that cooperative members are unaware of any union services and asserted they don't receive any benefits from the union. For example, one cooperative president asserted that the union is still new, so it is

not an expectation that cooperatives see many benefits from the union at this time. However, they have high expectations for the future.

Cooperative Governance. Interviews with cooperative members and leadership (board plus manager) showed that cooperatives function based on principles of elected leadership and accountability to membership. Board members are elected for three-year terms. A key informant interview with a cooperative president corroborated scorecard findings that leaders can (and do) seek re-election for additional terms, however, they personally would not seek re-election due to the immense time commitment of the position. Cooperative meetings are held, minimally annually, although some cooperatives report meeting seasonally, bi-annually, or that emergency meetings can be called to address specific issues. FGDs found that cooperative members are satisfied with this system and believe it fairly addresses member concerns.

To maintain financial records, most cooperatives hire accountants, who are paid out of membership fees. These hired accountants aren't necessarily members of the cooperative(s) but work with the elected leaders to establish and maintain financial records and profit and loss statements to submit to the Rwandan national government. In an interview with one such accountant, the evaluation team found that this is a challenging position. The accountant asserted that they have no interest in joining the cooperative they work for because it is "easy" for cooperative leaders to manipulate financial records for their own benefit. Although cooperative members have confidence in the financial management of the cooperatives overall, the hired accountants are totally reliant on the cooperation and record-keeping of cooperative leaders. One request from several FGDs was for unions to provide financial literacy trainings, so all cooperative members and leaders can improve their financial management and thus increase cooperative efficiency and profits.

Challenges. The primary challenges reported in interviews with cooperative members and leadership are delayed loan repayments and delayed payments from buyers. Delayed payments from buyers is particularly devastating to horticulture and maize cooperative members, as the planting season is input-intensive and thus expensive. Significant delays in buyer payments cause members to take out loans to cover production and household expenses. Although cooperatives do provide lending for members, interviews with cooperative leaders found this system becomes overburdened when a majority of members rely on it during the same period, as has been the case due to delays in buyer payments.

In addition, for dairy cooperatives, the high cost of electricity makes powering the milk storage tanks costly, limiting the number of tanks a cooperative can sustainably support, regardless of production. Two dairy cooperatives reported that they produce daily much more than their current tank capacity, however, are hesitant to increase tank capacity due to the exorbitant electricity costs. One cooperative in particular reported they are currently reliant on generators to support the electric needs of their storage tank, because the electric lines in the community are not sufficient. Leaders in that cooperative report that they have been collaborating with the union to get the regional government involved for several months. This is a significant management challenge for dairy cooperatives, as leaders must balance production levels with costs of operation.

For maize and horticulture cooperatives, supply can be higher than demand during the harvesting period, causing them to sell their produce at very low prices. One of the challenges for maize cooperatives is the lack of storage, which limits their ability to negotiate timing with buyers. This lack of storage is reported to be both a lack of sufficient storage space to contain all harvested maize, but also insufficient quality. One maize cooperative reported

that during harvest, cooperative members take turns sleeping at the collection site to prevent theft, as there are neither walls nor fencing protecting it. Climate related risks such as drought and increased rainfall, for example, pose challenges to cooperative production. Transportation is a challenge for all cooperatives, reportedly due to poor roads, limited road access during the rainy season in particular and related unpredictable buyer transportation. Cooperative members reported that buyers will use road conditions as “excuses” for delaying coming to purchase their products, resulting in losses, lower quality product, and corresponding lower prices. Transportation also limits cooperatives ability to purchase inputs, such as improved seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides in bulk, which is a cited challenge by both cooperative members and leaders. Furthermore, even when inputs are available, transportation is also a limitation for transportation of commodities to the cooperative from the farm.

Gender. A gendered lens was utilized in the design and facilitation of both the scorecard and learning agenda workshops, via integration of gender-specific topics and inclusion of male and female facilitators. Gender dynamics within cooperatives were assessed during FGDs and KIs. Access to cooperative membership is the one reported area that reportedly could differ between men and women in both Malawi and Rwanda.

The majority of cooperatives visited in Rwanda have a higher number of male than female members, according to membership data provided by Land O’Lakes. This is supported by interviews with cooperative members which found that men are more likely to be listed as the official cooperative member than women, although the production is largely completed as a household unit. In dairy cooperatives specifically, FGDs in Rwanda revealed that cows have traditionally been perceived to be owned exclusively by men, and women are only recently starting to own dairy cows. Interviews with female cooperative members found that women who are single mothers, have absent husbands, or don’t own any land or assets have the most difficulty in joining cooperatives, reportedly due to the time commitment.

In FGDs, cooperative members asserted that once individuals are members of the cooperative, men and women are treated in the same way and share responsibilities equally within the cooperative. Cooperative members in interviews also asserted that there aren’t additional benefits to participation for men versus women. This indicates that the primary gender-based imbalance is in the initial access to membership.

At the time of baseline field work, an in-depth gender study was being administered separate from TANGO activities. This report will provide a detailed gender-specific analysis.

4.2. Scorecard

The baseline scorecard workshop in Rwanda took place at the Iwawe Hotel in Kigali on Monday February 18th 2019. TANGO International facilitated the workshop, where 8 stakeholders involved in the cooperative sector in Rwanda were in attendance. This included representatives from NCCR, University of Lay Adventists Kigali, AgriPro Focus, the Rwandan Ministry of Commerce, and representatives from CD4-supported unions and cooperatives. The scorecard workshop completed scorecards for two topics:

Topic one: Level of cooperative sector capacity in Rwanda to support cooperative development.

Topic two: Level of support provided to cooperative development in Rwanda by the national and international development community.

Stakeholders developed three (3) elements of measurement for topic one and five (5) elements of measurement for topic two. All but one element scored between 4-5 out of ten. The highest score, 7, was given to “policy and laws governing cooperatives are set”. This is reasonable in the Rwandan context, as cooperative policy is very established. The final scorecards can be found in Figures 3 and 4, below. Stakeholders were unable to reach consensus on 5 of the 8 total scores, so for these elements, the score is an average of scores that were proposed by participants. These are demarcated in red text on the scorecards.

The scorecard activity can be used by CD4 to identify sector level gaps, and prioritization of activities. Elements that received the lowest scores can be prioritized areas of attention for CD4 activities. In Rwanda this is: access to information and knowledge sharing (4.3 score). Areas in which there are contradictions between baseline findings from interviews with cooperative members versus reported justifications on scorecards, can be examined by CD4. For example, cooperative members reported that they often have a surplus of production, which depresses prices. Scorecard component 2.3, however, reports that cooperatives have insufficient produce to satisfy the market.

Figure 3: Rwanda Scorecard One

I. Level of cooperative sector capacity (enabling environment) to support cooperative development.						
No.	Element	Level 0	Level 10	Evidence	Score ¹³	Justification ¹⁴
I.1	Access to information and knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of timely and relevant information - Poor channels or means of communication of information to relevant audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to timely information - Effective communication of relevant information is shared through appropriate channels to reach intended audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of proper channels and permanent means of information sharing - Volume of relevant information transmitted by each channel 	4.3 ¹⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Means of information sharing is not accessible to or used by all members - Communication among cooperatives and apex bodies (union, federations) is poor. E.g. members of primary cooperatives have limited information about the activities of their unions, federations - Radio is the common means of communication, but doesn't provide all relevant information related to cooperatives
I.2	Policy and laws governing cooperatives are set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incomplete and ineffective policies and laws - No participation of cooperative members or representatives in policy making - Members of cooperatives are not aware about new policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies are in place and implemented and all members of cooperatives are aware - Policies protect or support the interests of cooperatives - Cooperative members and representatives actively engaged in policy-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of policies in place and given to every cooperative at the time of registration. - Number of policies in place that support the interests of cooperatives. - Number of contacts/ events in which cooperatives or their representatives provide input into establishing policies 	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive cooperative policies exist and the government tries to share the content, but 100% knowledge not there yet. - Some members of cooperatives are not able to read and write and their leaders don't inform them on new policies even though the government tries to share the content. - Policies are largely, but not fully, followed by cooperatives. For example, the required number of annual meetings are not always conducted, and not all members are aware of these meetings. - Procedure for registration is not very easy and those who want to lack the knowledge/means to fill

¹³ The majority of scores were unanimous and reached consensus, however, for some element's participants were unable to come to consensus. In these cases, an average of the scores voted upon by each stakeholder are provided, indicated by footnotes.

¹⁴ Justifications for scoring were provided by stakeholder attendees based on their experience and knowledge of the sector.

¹⁵ The range of scores for this element are as follows: 3 stakeholders voted for a score of 4, three other stakeholders votes for a score of 5, and one stakeholder voted for a score of 6.

						in all the documents required and the need to consult relevant help slows down the process
1.3	Governance (Leadership) and structured management in terms of paid staff, and structure of union, federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor leadership and management due to lack of skill - Lack of participation of all relevant stakeholders in decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperative leadership capacity is in place. - Cooperative members involved in decision making. - Gender balance and youth presence in governance and decision making. - Improved accounting and administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainings on cooperative governance and management - Number (percent) of women, youth in leadership positions. - Number of management meetings and self-evaluation and audit 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership in cooperatives has partial, but incomplete, knowledge about governance issues relevant for cooperatives. - Term limits on leadership (3 years) for cooperatives are not followed, some leaders want to stay in power. - Youth don't practice agriculture, less likely to be members of agricultural cooperatives - Cooperatives are responsible for handling large amounts of money but with limited capacities for financial management. efficient record keeping is necessary

Figure 4: Rwanda Scorecard Two

2. Level of support provided to cooperative development in Rwanda by the national and international development community. How effectively are other actors impacting cooperative sector (research, donors, international NGOs, government)?						
No.	Element	Level 0	Level 10	Evidence	Score	Justification
2.1	Government financial support to cooperative sector (investments in supporting infrastructure, extension services; subsidies on inputs to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor roads, communication infrastructure, electricity, etc. - No investments or subsidies provided to cooperative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High level of appropriate government investments in infrastructure - High level of appropriate investments and subsidies to sustainably foster development of the cooperative sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of infrastructure (road conditions, communication access, etc.) - Level and appropriateness of government investments into cooperative sector 	5 ¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government provides subsidies to inputs/seeds - Public investment in basic infrastructure (roads) is good - Public investment in agricultural infrastructure (e.g. irrigation systems) not sufficient because majority reliant on rainfed ag

¹⁶ The range of scores for this element are as follows: 4 stakeholders voted for a score of 6, and four stakeholders voted for a score of four.

	cooperatives, etc.)					
2.2	Trainings, field visits, information sharing (provided by external actors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few trainings, poor quality - Trainings not focused on highest priority topics - no coordination of trainings across different providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building is significant (large number of high-quality trainings, in relevant topics) - Effective coordination of trainings - Farmers are consistently producing at high quality levels as a result of trainings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainings provided. (harmonized training manuals reviewed by Rwanda Cooperative Agency) - Number of learning events (field visits). - Types and method of information sharing. 	4.5 ¹⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Same people participate in multiple trainings, so knowledge is shared with the same people, not widely disseminated to a broader audience. - Trainings/help provided from NGOs is not evenly distributed (many cooperatives aren't receiving any trainings at all) - Trainings provided by cooperatives get a 1 score - NGO training get a 7 score - because these efforts are not coordinated - Government 5-6 score because don't often follow up after effective initial training to newly-formed coops. - Overall - coordination /harmonization of efforts is limited
2.3	Market linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient market linkages to absorb all production of the coops. - Substandard price of coops produces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stable, sustainable market available to purchase all quantities provided by the coops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of contract farming agreements, or other long-term buyer contracts - Certification schemes 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperatives have insufficient produce/cannot satisfy the market - Poor quality of produce - Cooperatives don't have bargaining power; they are price takers - the buyers propose them the price of their produce - No minimum certification depending on quality of goods - Lack of adequate storage facilities
2.4	Access to finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited access to finance by cooperative members, cooperatives, apex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sufficient financing available for all cooperatives and members at reasonable cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of coops with access to finance for themselves and their members 	4.4 ¹⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financing comes late - Cooperatives do not have enough guarantee for the credit they would like to have - Banking institutions that provide support to agriculture loans are few and not found in all districts - High interest rates from financial institutions

¹⁷ The range of scores for this element are as follows: 2 stakeholders voted for a score of 6, 3 stakeholders voted for a score of 5, and 3 stakeholders voted for a score of 3.

¹⁸ The range of scores for this element are as follows: 2 stakeholders voted for a score of 6, five stakeholders voted for a score of four, and one voted for a score of 3.

		organizations				
2.5	Donations, Grants provided to cooperatives from government, NGOs, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited support, very few cooperatives getting donations, grants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many cooperatives getting donations, grants. - Donations/grants provided to foster cooperative development in a sustainable manner - High coordination of coordination across donors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of coops that have benefited from donations and grants from the government and other NGOs - Participation of recipient in how grant/donation is used. 	4.9 ¹⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - donations/equipment that does not meet the cooperative needs or capacity. - Sustainability of donations; need for maintenance - Less/no knowledge on operating the equipment - Distribution of donations to all cooperatives (some cooperatives are receiving multiple donations)

¹⁹ The range of scores for this element are as follows: 3 stakeholders voted for a score of 4, four stakeholders voted for a score of five, and one stakeholder voted for a score of 7.

4.3. Learning Agenda

The learning agenda produced through this baseline evaluation is a living document and can be utilized as an initial framework the CLP can refine over time. Ultimately this learning agenda will result in research on identified topics to build the evidence base on innovative solutions that can be applied by the international community to cooperative development programs.²⁰ This will result in increased dissemination of learning and more effective programming for cooperative development on a global level.

This learning agenda was developed via an iterative approach. First, a full-day workshop was held in which stakeholders participated in a facilitated workshop to identify the topics included in this learning agenda. During the learning agenda workshop, the high engagement of participants and enthusiasm for the topics and thematic areas identified in the workshop, resulted in an initial draft of 50+ questions. From this initial draft, criteria were set to eliminate potential research questions including: (1) questions that are not specific to CD4 cooperatives or could be applied more broadly to the private sector and (2) questions that do not require research but rather compilation of already existing information. After the learning agenda was reviewed using these criteria, it was sent to participating stakeholders and Land O'Lakes staff for additional feedback and review.

This resulted in 5 identified topics.

1. Effective apex service provision, approaches, modalities.
2. Youth and gender participation in cooperatives.
3. Role of the public sector in supporting cooperatives.
4. Primary cooperative service provision and decision making.
5. Primary cooperative financial system.

These topics are detailed in the Learning Agenda, included in Annex 8.7 of this report.

5. Malawi Results and Findings

5.1. Cooperatives

Because specific cooperatives and value chains were not yet selected for the CD4 activity in Malawi at the time of this baseline evaluation, interviews with cooperative members was not possible. Thus, TANGO activities in Malawi focused on assessing the overall conditions of the cooperative sector and current status of apex organizations within the sector. As a result, the Malawi findings do not have the same level of specificity for the cooperative level (i.e., services provided by cooperatives) as compared to Rwanda.

Role of Cooperatives. Key informant interviews with representatives from associations, apex organizations, and government officials that work with cooperatives in Malawi indicate a common perception that the purpose of cooperatives is not primarily business-related, but rather that cooperatives serve a social function. There is a

²⁰ Land O'Lakes International Development, CD-4 Activity Scope of Work

reported lack of understanding of the purpose of cooperatives as business entities, i.e., entities that are intended to provide economic benefits to their members.

Overall, interviews indicate that there is a wide range of variation in the capacities and performance of cooperatives in the agricultural sector. Over the past 20 years, formation and strengthening of agricultural cooperatives in Malawi has been largely donor driven. Many cooperatives in Malawi have been formed through direct support from external projects, and many of these cooperatives have become inactive after direct project support ended. There is also a wide variation in the governance capacities of agricultural cooperatives. As reported by representatives from apex bodies, government departments and other cooperative projects, many agricultural cooperatives in Malawi are controlled quite directly by their founders or presidents, with little input or oversight from other board members or cooperative members at large. Key informant interviews also found cooperatives are perceived to generally lack technical competence of management and quality standards.

In addition to providing a structure for collective marketing of members' products, which is the main service cited, interviews show that some primary cooperatives also provide members with access to inputs and other services, including providing access to credit and extension services.

Sector Differences. Representatives from the dairy, macadamia, and horticulture sectors were interviewed for this evaluation. These sectors are quite different and have unique strengths and challenges. The macadamia sector is unique in that macadamia trees take 8-9 years to produce after planting, resulting in a significant lag time for return on investment. Furthermore, interviews show that macadamia cooperatives sell their macadamia nuts to their union, the Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited (HIMACUL). HIMACUL represents smallholder macadamia growers in Malawi and is Fair Trade certified.²¹ Interviews show that HIMACUL then sells the macadamia nuts to buyers and national processors. This system of sale is different from that of the dairy and horticulture sectors. In the dairy sector, cooperatives sell milk directly to buyers, while associations and unions support in price negotiations. Dairy cooperatives typically have milk bulking groups to facilitate aggregated milk sales. Similarly, horticulture cooperatives typically aggregate their production and connect with buyers at the cooperative level.

As found in interviews with multiple stakeholders, the dairy and horticulture sectors exhibit significant activity in the provision of inputs and trainings by apex bodies as compared to the macadamia sector, whose primary service provided is buying cooperatives production. Dairy associations are highly engaged in providing inputs and services to cooperative members, including trainings and inputs for animal husbandry, artificial insemination, management, milk quality and hygiene. For the horticulture sector, the highly valued services provided include organization of exchange visits to other cooperatives and trainings on post-harvest handling.

Apex Organizations. In comparison with Rwanda, the apex organizations (which include associations, unions, and federations) in Malawi appear to be more actively engaged in providing a range of services to their member cooperatives. Despite the nascency of the sector as a whole, apex bodies in Malawi are found to be fairly established and stable while cooperatives are reportedly less so. Cooperative members were not interviewed as part of this evaluation, as CD4-supported cooperatives were not yet selected, so it is not possible for this

²¹ Malawian Smallholder Macadamia.: Information Portal for Smallholder Macadamia Organisations and Stakeholders based in Malawi. Developments, news, progress and so on. 2013. Blog. <http://malawismallholdermacs.blogspot.com/>

evaluation to determine the extent to which the reported apex service provision is received by cooperative farmer members. Key informant interviews found that there is not any systemic difference in the types of services provided by the different apex organizations. Overall, the apex bodies are providing inputs and helping to negotiate prices with buyers of the products sold by members. In the dairy sector, both the Federation and Unions provide their primary cooperative members with access to key inputs, such as semen and liquid nitrogen for artificial insemination services, animal feed, medicines and veterinary services. Direct interaction between apex bodies and farmers, however, is limited. Interviews found that most of the apex organizations work with farmers if there is need for some training or they want to buy some commodities from farmers, and some apex organizations work directly with farmers in areas of production and lobbying for policy change and markets for the value chains. Interviews also found that there is currently a lack of appropriate criteria or processes for identifying farmers' needs. Key informants assert that this is because cooperatives are formed prior to establishment of a business model, with the intention of getting support from donors and/or NGOs. The following services were reported to be provided by apex bodies.

- Price negotiation and other support for marketing of members' products
- Lobbying for pro-cooperative government policies
- Provision of inputs and services on credit or at discounted rates
- Trainings on:
 - Animal husbandry
 - Artificial insemination
 - Management
 - Post-harvest handling
 - Milk quality and hygiene
 - Business development and marketing
 - Role and purpose of cooperative(s)
- Organization of exchange visits to other cooperatives
- Facilitation of linkages to private sector
- Auditing of financial records

The scope and scale of the extent to which these services are provided is not possible to report at this time. The Social Capital and Perceptions Survey tool, which will be administered in Malawi in 2019 by CD4 staff, will capture the extent to which services are accessed by cooperatives.

Services Needed. Currently, the Cooperative Department within the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism is responsible for registration of all cooperatives, provides training for cooperative board members, assists in the development of cooperative bylaws, and provides auditing services for a small fee. However, this ministry is understaffed. There are currently seven staff to supervise over 1,070 cooperatives in Malawi. Ministry representatives asserted that additional resources and capacity building to supervise cooperatives are needed as the sector continues to grow.

Interviews found there is a need in Malawi to increase support for the marketing component of cooperatives, particularly those in emerging or less established sectors.

Policy. Interviews found that the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) and the Malawi Lake Basin consortium advocate on behalf of the cooperative sector in policy making. FUM reported to also facilitate policy implementation arrangements with stakeholders.

The cooperative policy was adopted in Malawi in 1997.²² This policy contains general guidelines for the cooperative sector, including policies for cooperative education and training policies and the cooperative institutional framework.²³ Government representatives who participated in the scorecard workshop reported that the national cooperative policy is currently being updated, although did not give specifics for when this will be completed. Stakeholders reported that the current cooperative policies do not adequately support the cooperative sector, limiting growth. Furthermore, the cooperative enabling environment is dependent on more than a single cooperative policy, but stakeholders assert that it is also dependent on other areas, such as agricultural and trade policies, for example.

Challenges. Stakeholders report several key challenges facing the cooperative sector in Malawi, including a dependence on external assistance, low literacy levels, complex and lengthy registration process, poor infrastructure, and a lack of coordination among apex bodies.

External Assistance. One challenge for the cooperative sector in Malawi at this stage is the dependence on external assistance. Before the late 90s when the multiparty system was established in Malawi, the government discouraged the development of cooperatives. Now, this is changing as the government increases support toward the development of cooperatives, although this is still in relatively nascent stages. This has resulted in a cooperative sector in Malawi that is highly reliant on external support from foreign-funded projects. For example, interviews with the Malawi Milk Producers Association found that ■■■ of their budget is derived from external project-funding. The remaining budget is derived from sale of inputs to cooperative members and membership fees.

Cooperatives can be highly successful while receiving project support. However, cooperatives have been found to become inactive and/or collapse after project closure, making sustainability a challenge. Interviews found that there is a perception that the government still lacks support for cooperatives which has further limited growth of technical capacity both at cooperative and apex organization levels. Interviews and workshops found that stakeholders in the sector feel government legal frameworks and protections as well as financial and technical support for primary cooperatives are lacking.

Literacy. A common theme in several key informant interviews and corroborated by scorecard findings is that low literacy and education rates is a challenge for cooperatives in Malawi. This was identified as a particular constraint for women, further limiting their ability to attain leadership positions. While literacy impacts women's ability to assume leadership positions, the primary challenge for women's access to leadership positions was cited by key informants and activity staff to be gender-based cultural norms and expectations, namely, that men are the expected leaders, not women.

²² Cooperative Development Policy. Government of Malawi Ministry of Commerce and Industry. June 1997. Accessed online. <https://cepa.rmpportal.net/Library/government-publications/Cooperative%20Development%20Policy%201997.pdf/view>.

²³ Cooperative Development Policy. Government of Malawi Ministry of Commerce and Industry. June 1997. Accessed online. <https://cepa.rmpportal.net/Library/government-publications/Cooperative%20Development%20Policy%201997.pdf/view>.

Registration. In Malawi there are relatively few formally registered cooperatives, unions, and federations. Interviews show that the registration process is tedious and takes a long time to complete. There are several reasons for this. First, the entity responsible for registration, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, is understaffed and the staff that are in place reportedly have conflicting roles. This creates bottlenecks and delays. Then, the process itself contains several steps, outlined below.

1. A group must first be formed, then notify the Registrar of Cooperative Societies.
2. Before registration begins, a training with an offer from the registrar's office needs to be arranged. This training focuses on ideology of the cooperative and members' roles in the cooperative. It also helps members develop the bylaws. One key informant reported that this training is designed to include all 9 board members of the registering cooperative.
3. After training is completed, the group must submit the registration application. The application is accompanied by registration fees, as prescribed under the cooperative society's regulations and three copies of the by-laws signed by the chairperson, secretary and treasurer of the proposed cooperative society.

Although the group is supposed to be notified within thirty days of submitting their application, interviews with the Ministry and other stakeholders find that this is often significantly delayed, and can take anywhere from two to nine months.

The registration process is different for associations, and reportedly less of a challenge. Land O'Lakes staff assert that there are more incentives for registration as an association. However, it should be noted that many associations have primary cooperative members.

Infrastructure. Poor infrastructure, specifically low-quality roads and limited electricity is also a challenge, as cooperative farmers have difficulty transporting their produce, limited access to buyers/markets, and constrained access to necessary inputs.

Coordination. Finally, at the apex level, there are many organizations working and providing services within the cooperative sector. However, there is a lack of coordination and communication between these bodies, which reportedly limits the growth of the cooperative sector.

Gender. A gendered lens was utilized in the design and facilitation of both the scorecard and learning agenda workshops, via integration of gender-specific topics and inclusion of male and female facilitators. Gender dynamics within cooperatives were assessed during FGDs and KIIs. Access to cooperative membership is the one reported area that reportedly could differ between men and women in both Malawi and Rwanda.

Key informant interviews found that the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) has deliberate gender mainstreaming policies that are designed to trickle down to its subsidiaries. For example, there is a minimum number of women that are required to be on cooperative union boards at the district level. This requirement of having a minimum number of women in leadership roles was found in other interviews, as well. However, interviews also showed that the expected trickle down of women taking leadership roles at other levels within the cooperative sector was not happening and would require more direct facilitation, such as through project interventions, to occur.

Interviews found that the Central Region Milk Producers Association (CREMPA) has a policy that stipulates 30% of leadership positions should be held by women, and currently 20-30% of leadership positions are currently held by women; however, a CREMPA representative suggested that, when targeting service provision, 50% of individuals receiving services should be women and/or youth. CREMPA also reported that although 70% of milk bulkers are women, the cows are predominately owned by men.

Interviews with the Horticultural Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited (HOFACOL) and the Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited (HIMACUL) found that the majority of farmer members are women. In the case of HOFACOL, 33% of the leadership roles are filled by women (one woman is a general member of the board, one is the deputy secretary general responsible for administrative tasks, and one is the chairperson responsible for making final decisions for cooperatives). In the case of HIMACUL, 11% of the leadership roles are filled by a woman (the cooperative manager is a woman).

Key informants and stakeholders participating in the scorecard and learning agenda workshop cited two reasons for gender-based differences in cooperative participation. Low literacy and cultural norms and expectations were cited as reasons for relatively low numbers of women members and leaders throughout the cooperative sector.

5.2. Scorecard

The baseline scorecard workshop in Malawi took place at the Wamkulu Palace in Lilongwe on Thursday April 4th, 2019. TANGO International facilitated the workshop, where eight stakeholder organizations involved in the cooperative sector in Malawi were in attendance. This included representatives from the Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives Limited, Civil Society Agriculture Network, Shire Highlands Milk Producers Association, Malawi Assemblies of God University, Central Region Milk Producers Association, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Malawi Lake Basin Program, Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited, Mwaiwathu Women Cooperative.

The scorecard workshop completed scorecards for two topics:

Topic one: Level of cooperative sector capacity in Malawi to support cooperative development.

Topic two: Level of support provided to cooperative development in Malawi by the national and international development community.

Stakeholders developed five (5) elements of measurement for topic one and five (5) elements of measurement for topic two. All but two elements received a score of two (2). The element “policy, laws, and regulations governing cooperatives are set” was scored at 3.5 and “research community support” received a score of one (1). The relatively low scores are not surprising as the cooperative sector in Malawi is new and cooperatives are highly reliant on NGO development projects, which has left the sector as a whole sporadically and unsustainably supported. For each element in the scorecards (Figures 5 and 6), the stakeholders came to consensus for the scoring; therefore, none of the scores are calculated averages.

The scorecard activity can be used by CD4 to identify sector level gaps, and prioritization of activities. In Malawi in particular, the scorecard activity at this stage sets a helpful baseline of understanding of the current state of the cooperative sector for Land O'Lakes CD4 staff.

Figure 5: Malawi Scorecard One

1. Level of cooperative sector capacity (enabling environment) to support cooperative development						
<i>Enabling environment = functionality of cooperative sector, through knowledge sharing, policies, government support, etc.</i>						
No.	Element	Level 0 (Worst Case)	Level 10 (Best Case)	Evidence	Score	Justification
I.1	Availability and access to information and knowledge sharing (Cooperative development concepts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited, inaccurate, and out of date, information, and not shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active collection of information, research and mechanisms for sharing information, and information effectively shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory of studies, Evidence and findings disseminated and used Existence of platform for sharing and disseminating information 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some studies have been done. Information not in public domain, not being used, often outdated if used. No information sharing platform limits the extent to which information is being shared.
I.2	Policy, laws, and regulations governing cooperatives are set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdated policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-to-date and responsive to current needs of the sector Favorable and proactive tax and trade policies that support cooperative development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current status of legislation and policies 	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperative development policy drafted; consultations completed. Planned approval of policy by cabinet in May 2019. Revisions to laws and regulations still to be done. Cooperative sector is affected by other policies also. Agricultural policy is up-to-date, but others, including the cooperative development policy (currently under revision) are out of date. Acknowledge progress, but much remains, and upcoming elections may delay
I.3	Sector institutional framework and governance, including coordination across all organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear structure between Ministry Trade and Agriculture, and low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear roles between Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, regarding cooperative development, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions made by various stakeholders and performance of the sector 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall lack of coordination/clarity of roles and responsibilities, but beginning to be strengthened Although government representatives

	within the sector	<p>levels of coordination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of communication from apex to cooperative levels. 	<p>and functional coordination/collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Govt effective engagement/guidance with cooperative sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional analysis of the cooperative sector 		<p>working in the cooperative department are aware that there is on-going collaboration between trade and agricultural ministries (starting 5-6 years ago), there is no evidence of this at the cooperative level</p>
1.4	Governance (Leadership) and structured management of cooperatives and apex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak organizational structure at all levels. Exists on paper but not in practices Constraints imposed by traditions and cultural norms on effective governance (restrictions on participation of women, youth in leadership) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective organization structure in practice as well as on paper. Women and youth can effectively participate in cooperative leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance of cooperatives Institutional analysis of cooperatives and apex organizations 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many have structures on paper, but not functioning Wide variety of governance structures and leadership styles across individual coops, regionally and by value chain Many instances where Cooperative essentially controlled by president Participation of women is limited for cultural reasons, also because of lower education levels and literacy of women
1.5	Political will and leadership (lobbying, advocacy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Leadership speaks out against cooperative development, or supports positions not aligned with cooperative development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong public support for cooperative development at all levels of government, especially top levels of leadership. Strong and influential cooperative sector advocates and champions advocating for sector improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public statements made by political leaders and other influential individuals/organizations 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some public pronouncements have been made, but no follow-up actions. Support for cooperates has become politicized, very reactive

Figure 6: Malawi Scorecard Two

2. Level of support provided to cooperative development in Malawi by the national and international development community						
How effectively are other actors impacting cooperative sector? (research, donors, international NGOs, government).						
No.	Element	Level 0 (Worst Case)	Level 10 (Best Case)	Evidence	Score	Justification
2.1	Government financial support to cooperative sector (investments in supporting infrastructure, extension services; subsidies on inputs to cooperatives, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor infrastructure (roads, telecommunication, electricity, water supplies) available for cooperative facilities in rural areas. Government use of foreign assistance funds in ways that do not support cooperative development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate investments in all infrastructure and services Government strategy on using foreign assistance supports cooperative development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditions of infrastructure and quality of government services Level and form of public investments and how the investments affect (positively or negatively) the cooperative sector. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport infrastructure, electricity is poor, poor health because of lack of healthcare Government using foreign assistance in ways that do not support long-term private sector growth due to donor-minded approach, investments largely made through projects Need for education system reform
2.2	Private sector support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-competitive market conditions (few potential buyers of products, few providers of inputs) that confer bargaining power to the buyers and sellers who interact with cooperatives. No market premiums paid for quality products Ineffective regulation of markets for agricultural products and inputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive markets, many buyers and sellers Market premium for quality products Buyers and sellers understand the benefits (and disadvantages) of long-term relationships Effective regulation of market transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of buyers and sellers Price trends of relevant products and inputs Information on how effectively markets are regulated Existence of markets that pay premiums for quality 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buyers of agricultural outputs have market power Lack of information and transparency on market prices and conditions Availability of and access to quality and affordable inputs There is need for effective regulation of market transactions e.g. contracts.

2.3	Research community support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interest in conducting research to address issues concerning cooperative development in Malawi No funding or resources to support research directed toward issues concerning cooperative development in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated research space for cooperative development and associated value chains. Research is grounded in cooperative needs Adequate funding Adequate technical capacity for research on cooperative development Platform/channels for dissemination of research findings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of research studies addressing issues in cooperative development Number of individuals and units in research organizations that conduct research on cooperative development Levels of funding supporting research on cooperative development Existence of platform or forum for sharing research findings 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited research, only on value chains. No research on cooperative development specifically No platform/dissemination No governmental funding, beneficiaries are donor supported, and thus research is donor-driven.
2.4	Donor community support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No or little funding to support cooperative development Available funding is not appropriately utilized to address needs, interests of cooperative sector in sustainable manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiary-focused Adequate levels Sustainable, not dependency-creating Funding appropriately targeted Appropriate balance (across sectors, health/education vs. Econ development& governance) Partners instead of donors only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of donor funding to support cooperative development Evaluations that assess the effectiveness and sustainability of donor investments in the cooperative sector 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of investment is relatively high, and growing, but limited impact of donor investments A score of 2 was given because most participants would like to move from a donor-driven model to a partnership model.
2.5	Local community and leadership support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leadership does not adequately understand the principles that underly cooperative development, and do not actively support cooperative development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of engagement and support from local leaders for cooperative development, leading to high level of positive participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about community support to the cooperative sector 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support, but ineffective. Expectations of leaders and community members don't align. Local leaders do not really understand cooperative development

5.3. Learning Agenda

The learning agenda produced through this baseline evaluation is a living document and can be refined by CD4 staff and relevant stakeholders over time. Ultimately this learning agenda will result in research on identified topics to build the evidence base on innovative solutions that can be applied by the international community to cooperative development programs.²⁴ This will result in increased dissemination of learning and more effective programming for cooperative development on a global level.

The Malawi CD4 learning agenda was developed via an iterative approach. First, sector stakeholders participated in a facilitated workshop that combined the scoring exercise and identification of learning agenda topics. After this workshop, the learning agenda was sent to participating stakeholders and Land O'Lakes staff for additional feedback and review.

This resulted in four identified topics.

1. Policies, laws, regulations governing cooperatives
2. Institutional structures and governance: Cooperative organizations and other stakeholders (government)
3. Availability and access to information and knowledge sharing
4. Support to cooperative sector (government, private, research community, donors)

Each is outlined in detail in the full learning agenda, included in annex 8.8 of this report.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions at this baseline stage focus on recommendations for (1) CD4 activity implementation and (2) the CD4 monitoring, evaluation and research methodology.

6.1 Implementation

Decisions and recommendations made in the monitoring and evaluation workshop(s), have implications for the implementation of the M&E system. CD4 staff will need to ensure the additional registration questions are integrated into the PM2 tool, and the IMPACTS database includes all necessary information to measure activity indicators. Furthermore, the refined indicators (as identified in appendix 7.1) will need to be reflected in updated monitoring plans and analysis of progress moving forward.

Rwanda

The capacity and role of unions in the cooperative sector in Rwanda needs to be strengthened. Based on KIs and observations of union leadership in Rwanda, unions currently face limited financial and staff capacity to provide significant support to member cooperatives beyond price negotiation and advocacy. At this stage, unions in the dairy, maize, and horticulture sectors have very limited resources and capacity, and thus are not currently able to

²⁴ Land O'Lakes International Development, CD-4 Activity Scope of Work

provide services needed to strengthen the member cooperatives. Generally, cooperative members have a limited perception of what the role of the union can and should be. All interviewed cooperatives reported that unions provide “advocacy” but were not able to clearly define what this means. Based on interviews with CD4 staff, cooperative members and union leadership, the evaluation team finds “advocacy” in this case means effective price negotiations with buyers.

CD4 should develop a strategy to focus technical support to unions based on the key needs of cooperatives identified through this baseline evaluation. These needs include: buyer identification, price negotiation, bulk buying of inputs, assistance with transportation, training on financial and cooperative management. This identification of cooperative needs, however, should be an ongoing activity for unions, continually assessing what assistance is needed by cooperative members. The evaluation team had a small sample size, and only conducted qualitative interviews with CD4-supported cooperatives. CD4 staff will need to assess unions to verify if identified needs are the same across all their member cooperatives. This assessment exercise presents an opportunity for CD4 activities to support unions in designing strategies to effectively reach out to their members and prioritize addressing identified needs based on union capacity.

Another opportunity would be to support unions with an effective messaging strategy to encourage all their member cooperatives to increase monetary contributions for union activities. To successfully engage with all member cooperatives, unions are in need of additional (monetary) support from members. As the majority of cooperatives are not experiencing or expecting significant support from unions, the evaluation team finds that cooperative members generally do not highly value the union at this stage. CD4 can support unions in developing a business case, value proposition, for unions to explain to cooperatives how much it will cost for the union to provide identified services, and what the benefit(s) are to the cooperative. Unions then need to communicate this to cooperatives. Unions need to demonstrate to their value add to their members, i.e., because they are larger and have economies of scale, unions can access inputs more cheaply than individual coops can. Similarly, for maize and horticulture, because unions would have the ability to negotiate larger quantities, unions could be more effective for price negotiation. The CD4 activity can support capacity building for unions via training in negotiation strategy, for example.

In summary, unions need support to (1) identify member needs, (2) develop methodology for union workplan to address those needs and (3) development of a business case (justification) to their members for what capacity and resources are needed in order to address cooperative needs. The evaluation team recommends that the CD4 staff develop a strategy to effectively integrate unions when CD4 staff are working directly with cooperatives. This would improve the unions’ capacities to replicate CD4 support to cooperatives that are not being directly supported by the CD4 activity. This is in alignment with the CD4 development hypothesis, that strengthening apex bodies will improve performance of member cooperatives.

Malawi

The CD4 activity should focus on value chains with existing apex body infrastructure but where capacity gaps still exist. Land O’Lakes is still in the process of selecting cooperatives and value chains to be included in CD4 activities. It is recommended that value chains with an existing apex organization structure already in place, but in need of further support, are selected to be supported by the project. CD4 does not have sufficient resources or time to create new apex bodies, rather it is in a position to strengthen existing organizations. At the same time, a value chain that is already highly functioning, such as coffee for example, would not be appropriate for the CD4 activity.

CD4 should focus on ways to support government registration, training and oversight services to cooperatives; this is a key barrier to cooperative registration and development. Cooperatives are registered, organized, trained and audited by the Ministry of Trade and Industry; however, this Ministry has very limited resources. Key informant interviews have found that the Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (MUSCCO) have taken over responsibilities that the Ministry of Trade and Industry typically provide for savings and credit cooperatives in Malawi due to the low financial and staff capacity of the Ministry. MUSCCO is now effectively providing registration, trainings and auditing of financial reports for the financial cooperative sector. The Ministry of Trade and Industry strongly supports this strategy, as it will reduce the burden on the government agency, which has limited resources available to provide direct support and supervision to all primary cooperatives in the agricultural sector. The ministry representatives reported that there is particular interest in having non-governmental organizations assist with capacity building within the cooperative sector. The ministry would still be ultimately responsible for the registration process, while other organizations can support forming entities, help them to navigate the application process, and provide ongoing support after formal registration has been completed by the ministry. This model should be followed for agricultural cooperatives, to ensure cooperative service provision is available and of high quality.

CD4 should focus on strengthening apex bodies to provide improved governance and business services to cooperatives, including facilitating coordination among the many apex bodies that already exist in Malawi. Land O'Lakes and CD4 activities have significant opportunities in Malawi, since apex bodies already exist in the agricultural sector (often formed with the support of external projects), but still require additional technical support to become fully functioning organizations, capable of sustaining their operations only from the services they provide to their members. A key informant from the Malawi Milk Producers Association cited this lack of effective support of apex bodies to their members as a primary reason for the slow growth of the cooperatives sector in Malawi. CD4 should utilize learning from CD3 activities and the Cooperative Learning Platform implemented in Rwanda to positively impact coordination of apex bodies in Malawi. As found in the final evaluation of the CD3 activity completed in September 2018, "the CLP made an important contribution to coordination in the cooperative sector in Rwanda. The regular sharing of information through the CLP reduces duplication of efforts, encourages complementarity and dialogue. Furthermore, all the relevant government departments are engaged in all project activities".²⁵ Implementation of a CLP in Malawi is likely to be positively impactful to the cooperative sector in similar ways to those observed in Rwanda. An important step in this process, would be to collaborate with the cooperative sector stakeholders to formalize an updated institutional analysis/stakeholder mapping of the cooperative sector.

6.2 Methodology

Based on observations and findings from the baseline, it will be necessary to include cooperatives not directly supported by CD4 as well as CD4-supported cooperatives within CD4-supported unions in fieldwork activities during the midterm and final evaluations. To assess whether the CD4 support to unions has strengthened performance of all member cooperatives, it will be important to assess cooperatives that have not received direct CD4 support. More specifically, the assumptions underlying CD4 design can be validated by testing the following

²⁵ Final Evaluation of Land O'Lakes International Cooperative Development Project – 3 (CD3), Rwanda. TANGO International. September 2018.

hypotheses of the relative performance of supported and non-supported cooperatives within the supported apex organizations:

- i) At the time of the mid-term, while CD4 is still in the process of strengthening the capacities of the apex organizations, the performance of supported cooperatives is expected to be higher than non-supported cooperatives, as a result of direct CD4 support.
- ii) By the time of the endline evaluation, the performance of the non-supported cooperatives should begin to approach that of the supported cooperatives, resulting from strengthened support provided to them by the apex organizations.

The CD4 activity intends to implement a process of review of the performance of supported cooperatives, with the objective of identifying cooperatives that should be 'graduated' from receiving continuing direct support from CD4. One of the explicit objectives of the mid-term evaluation should be to provide input into identifying appropriate criteria that the activity should apply.

It is good practice to continue detailed gender studies, particularly to repeat at endline, as gender is a particular area of interest for CD4. Overall evaluations have limitations in deeply evaluating gender dynamics within constrained timeframes. Ensuring a gender analysis similar to that conducted at baseline is repeated at endline (and midterm, if financially feasible), is recommended. The midterm and final evaluation design should incorporate findings from the baseline gender study to confirm and update the baseline findings.

7. Appendices

7.1. CD4 Revised Indicators

Below is the finalized list of CD4 indicators. Indicators that have been revised based on agreement in the Rwanda Monitoring and Evaluation workshop are highlighted in green.

Table 7: CD4 Revised Indicators

	INDICATOR	Disaggregate(s)	Data Collection Tool
1	Improved Cooperative Enabling Environment		
1	OUTCOME: Perceived value score for apex organizations	Sex; Age; New/Continuing; Country	Social Capital and Perceptions Survey
2	OUTCOME: Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)	Age; Country	Attendee Records/Event Log
3	OUTCOME: Number of cooperatives and credit unions with improved governance (USAID PPR) <u>scores</u>	Type of Organization; Country	PM2 Tool (computed from subset of components)
4	OUTCOME: Value of income and/or services delivered to members by cooperatives and credit unions (USAID PPR)	Type of Organization; Country	Financial statements
4a	OUTCOME: Number of services delivered to members by <u>cooperatives</u>		Registration Tool
4b	OUTCOME: Number of services delivered to members by <u>apex organizations</u>		Registration Tool
1	Strengthen Apex Bodies		
5	OUTCOME: Revenue of apex bodies	Type of Organization; Country	Financial statements
6	OUTCOME: Number of activity-supported apex bodies that have improved one level on the PM2 tool	Type of Organization; Country	PM2 Tool
1	Transition the Rwandan CLP		
7	OUTPUT: Number of primary cooperatives and apex bodies that attend a CLP event (Rwanda)	Type of Organization; Country	Attendee Records/Event Log
1	Build the Malawian CLP		
8	OUTPUT: Number of primary cooperatives and apex bodies that attend a CLP event (Malawi)	Type of Organization; Value Chain; Country	Attendee Records/Event Log
2	Improve Cooperative Business Performance		

9	OUTCOME: Perceived value score for primary cooperatives	Sex; Age; New/Continuing; Country	Social Capital and Perceptions Survey
10	OUTCOME: Value of member equity in a cooperative or credit union (USAID PPR)	Type of Organization; Country	Financial Statements
11	OUTCOME: # of cooperative members benefiting from services and resources delivered through cooperatives and credit unions	Sex; Age; New/Continuing; Country	Registration Tool
2	Adapt Cooperative Development Tools		
12	OUTCOME: Number of business practice, procedure, or process adapted or newly adopted based on CDP-developed tools and resources	Country	Registration Tool
2	Provide targeted TA to Cooperatives		
13	OUTCOME: Number of activity-supported primary cooperatives that have improved one level on the PM2 tool	Country	PM2 Tool
14	OUTCOME: revenue of primary cooperatives	Country	Financial statements
2	Expand local cooperative-to-cooperative learning opportunities		
15	OUTPUT: Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations	Sex; Age; New/Continuing; Country	Attendee Records/Event Log
3	Improved Development Community Support for Cooperatives		
16	OUTCOME: Number (#) of organizations using CDP-developed tools and resources to benefit cooperatives and cooperative systems	Type of Organization; Country	Business Registration (including MOUs with Organizations)
3	Establish project-wide learning agenda		
17	OUTPUT: Number of learning agenda questions pursued	N/A	Research reports
3	Support Cooperative research to promote innovation in Rwanda		
18	OUTPUT: Number of learning agenda questions pursued	N/A	Research reports
3	Improve learning and dissemination platform on global scale		
19	OUTPUT: Number of learning or dissemination events held and/or publications released	Country; Type (Event or Publication)	Event Log

7.2. Rwanda Scorecard Workshop Agenda

Figure 7: Scoring Workshop Agenda

Land O'Lakes CD4 Scoring Workshop Agenda	
8:00am – 8:30am	Registration and gathering
8:30am – 9:00am	Introductions, overview of CD4 project activities and objectives.
9:00am – 10:00am	Workshop overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives - Visioning - Process
10:00am – 10:45am	Group work: scorecard activity A
10:45am – 11:00am	<i>Tea Break</i>
11:00am – 11:45am	Group work: scorecard activity B
11:45am – 12:00pm	Review of scorecard rubrics
12:00pm – 12:50pm	Group scoring
12:50pm – 1:00pm	Review and closing statements
1:00pm	Lunch

7.3. Rwanda Learning Agenda Workshop Agenda

Figure 8: Learning Agenda Workshop Agenda

Learning Agenda Workshop Schedule	
Topic	Group
8:30am – 9:00am Welcome, Introductions	Plenary
9:00am – 9:30am Discussion with stakeholders about proposed research themes.	Plenary
9:30am – 10:30am Groupwork: identify specific research questions within theme(s).	Small Groups
10:30am – 10:45am Tea Break	
10:45am – 12:00pm Group review	Plenary
12:00pm – 12:45pm Prioritization of specific research question (ranking: high, medium, low)	Plenary
12:45pm – 1:00pm Summary of day, and next steps	Plenary
1:00pm - Lunch	

7.4. Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop Agenda

Figure 9: Rwanda and Malawi Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop Agenda

CD4 M&E Workshop Agenda
Introduction and overview of Monitoring System
Review of Indicators
In-depth review of tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Registration- Event Logs- Financial Reports- PM2- Social Capital and Perceptions Survey (Sampling)
Review Monitoring Database
Optimal Timing of Activities
Evaluation System <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review Evaluation Objectives- Topical Outlines- Scorecard- Learning Agenda
Discussion, debrief, final questions

7.5. Rwanda Scorecard Workshop Attendees

8. Representatives from the following organizations attended the Scorecard workshop in Rwanda.

GILICU

RWAMACU

IKOIBU

KORAMWOROZI

AGRITERRA

AGRIPROFOCUS

UNILAK

NCCR

7.6 Rwanda Learning Agenda Workshop Attendees

Representatives from the following organizations attended the Learning Agenda workshop in Rwanda.

NDFFR

FCMR

RFHC

Kora Mworozi

UNILAK

AGRIPROFOCUS

AMIR

MINICOM

NCCR

RCA

7.7 Malawi Scorecard and Learning Agenda Workshop

CD4 Baseline Learning Agenda and Scorecard Workshop Agenda Thursday April 4 th 2019		
Time	Topic	Group
8:30am – 9:00am	Welcome, Introductions, Workshop Overview.	Plenary
Learning Agenda Activities		
9:00am – 9:30am	Discussion with stakeholders about proposed research themes.	Plenary
9:30am – 10:30am	Identification of specific research questions within theme(s).	Plenary
10:30am – 10:45am	Tea Break	
10:45am – 12:00pm	Group review and validation.	Plenary
12:00pm	Lunch	

Scorecard Activities		
1:00pm – 1:30pm	Introduction and explanation of scorecard activity.	Plenary
1:30pm – 2:30pm	Development and review of scorecard rubrics.	Plenary
2:30pm – 2:45pm	Tea Break	
2:45pm – 3:30pm	Group scoring.	Plenary
3:30pm – 4:00pm	Review and closing statements.	Plenary

7.8 Malawi Scorecard and Learning Agenda Attendees

Representatives from the following organizations attended the Scorecard and Learning Agenda workshop in Malawi.

MUSCCO- Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives Limited

CISANET-Civil Society Agriculture Network

SHMPA-Shire Highlands Milk Producers Association

MAGU- Malawi Assemblies of God University

CREMPA- Central Region Milk Producers Association

LUANAR- Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources

MOITT- Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism

MLBP- Malawi Lake Basin Program

HMACUL- Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited

Mwaiwathu Women Cooperative

7.9 Key Informant Interviews

Rwanda

In Rwanda, due to significant time constraints and a focus on gaining stakeholder input via the learning agenda and scorecard workshops the only Key Informant Interview conducted was with NCCR.

Malawi

In Malawi, key informant interviews were conducted with the following organizations: Central region Milk

Producers Association, Horticulture Cooperative Farmers of Lilongwe, Farmers Union of Malawi, Malawi Milk Producers Association, and the Ministry of Industry Tourism and Trade.

7.10 Rwanda Fieldwork Schedule

Day	Date	Description	Value Chain	Union and Federation	Names of Coops and Klls
Tuesday	5-Feb	Arrival			
Wednesday	6-Feb	In brief			
Thursday	7-Feb	2 Coops and 1 KII	DAIRY	GILICU	KORAMWOROZI (1 KII: President) KAMA (kora to kama)8'
Friday	8-Feb	2 coops	DAIRY	GILICU (3 Union Leaders: Presedent, VS/President and Adminstrative Assistant)	BTK (rukomo to ngarama)20' 6km COPEMUBU(cyamutara)20'
Saturday	9-Feb	Preparation			NA
Sunday	10-Feb	Preparation			NA
Monday	11-Feb	1 Cooperative and Kigali Key Informant Interviews	HORTICULTURE	IKOAIB(1Union Leader)	KOTINGOZA RCA NCCR 4 LOL STAFF)
Tuesday	12-Feb	2 Coops FGD and 1 coop KII	MAIZE	RWAMACU (1 Union Leader)	KOTWABIKI (1KII: Presendent) ISUKA IRAKIZA
Wednesday	13-Feb	2 Coops FGD	MAIZE	RWAMACU	GWIZA KOHUNYA (1KII:President)
Thursday	14-Feb	M&E Training			Staffs
Friday	15-Feb	M&E Training			Staffs
Saturday	16-Feb	Preparation			Kigali
Sunday	17-Feb	Preparation			Kigali
Monday	18-Feb	Scorecard Workshop			Tentative participant list below
Tuesday	19-Feb	Learning Agenda Workshop			Tentative participant list below
Wednesday	20-Feb	Out-brief, morning			Office
Tuesday	26-Feb	Out-brief, afternoon			Office

7.11 Malawi Fieldwork Schedule

Car One (Mark)

Day	Date	Description	Value Chain	Organization	Location
Wednesday	3-Apr	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	N/A	Land O'Lakes ID	Lilongwe- Office
			Dairy	Central Region Milk Producers Association (Union)	Lilongwe
			All	Malawi Lake Basin Project	Lilongwe
			All	Cooperative Department, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism	Lilongwe
			Horticulture	HOFACOL	Lilongwe
			Dairy	Malawi Milk Producers Association (Federation)	Lilongwe
Thursday	4-Apr	Scorecard Workshop/Learning Agenda Workshop	All	MUSCCO	Wamkulu Palace in Lilongwe Invitations sent 8:30AM-5:00PM <i>(people will likely not be there and ready to engage until 9AM)</i>
			All	CISANET	
			All	GIZ-MIERA	
			All	COMSIP	
			All	MSIKA	
			All	MLBP	
			All	LUANAR	
			All	MOITT	
			All	Malawi Assembly of God University	
			All	We Effect Staff	

			All	Mwati Cooperative (Tomato, Onion, Guava)	
			All	Mwaiwathu women Coop	
			All	Shire Highlands Milk Producers Association	
Friday	5-Apr	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) (as needed)			Will use small conference room in Land O'Lakes Office for M&E workshop
			Ntchisi Macadamia Cooperative		
			MSIKA		
			HMACUL Macadamia		

Car 2 (Bruce)					
Day	Date	Description	Value Chain	Organization	Location
Wednesday	3-Apr	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)		Land O'Lakes ID	Lilongwe- Office
			All	We Effect/Malawi Lake Basin Project	
			All	Nasfam	Lilongwe
			All	Farmers Union of Malawi	Lilongwe
			ALL	MOITT	Lilongwe
Thursday	4-Apr	Scorecard Workshop/Learning Agenda Workshop	Both TANGO staff to attend scorecard/learning agenda workshop		

Friday	5-Apr	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) (as needed)	M&E Workshop (8AM-1PM). Bruce departs for the airport around 3pm.

7.12 Rwanda Cooperative Membership Fees

The following table was provided by Land O'Lakes CD4 staff on May 29th 2019.

Value Chain	Union of	Number	Names of Primary Coop	# of Cooperative Members (Women)	# of Cooperative Members (Men)	# of Cooperative Members (Total)	Membership Fees	District
DAIRY	GILICU	1	KORAMWOROZI	32	135	167		Gicumbi
		2	KAMA	55	121	176		Gicumbi
		3	BTK	44	210	254		Gicumbi
		4	KOGIAGI	78	219	297		Gicumbi
		5	IAKIB	1542	2461	4003		Gicumbi
		6	COPEMUBU	20	102	122		Gicumbi
HORTICULTURE	IKOAIB	7	KOTINGOZA	36	28	64		Bugesera
		8	KOUABU	19	28	47		Bugesera
MAIZE	RWAMACU	9	COCUMAKI	20	23	43		Rwamagana
		10	ISUKA IRAKIZA	59	63	122		Rwamagana
		11	GWIZA RW 34	152	142	294		Rwamagana
		12	KOHUNYA	49	19	68		Rwamagana
Total				2106	3551			
Union		13	RWAMACU	20 Primary Coops				Rwamagana
		14	IKOAIB	5 Primary Coops				Bugesera
		15	GILICU	10 Primary Coops				Gicumbi

8. Annex

8.1 Results Framework

8.2 Scope of Work

8.3 Inception Report

8.4 Qualitative Topical Outlines

8.5 Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop PowerPoint

8.6 Social Capital and Perceptions Survey

8.7 Rwanda CD4 Learning Agenda

8.8 Malawi CD4 Learning Agenda