

USAID/MALAWI MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING SUPPORT (MELS) ACTIVITY

PERFORM Final Performance Evaluation Report

AID-612-TO-17-00001

Submitted September 26, 2019

Resubmitted April 1, 2020

Third Submission April 15, 2020

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFRI00	African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative
AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use
AgDiv	Agriculture Diversification Activity
BMZ	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
CEPA	Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
CIP	International Potato Center
CPI	Consolidated Processing Industries
DEA	Department of Energy Affairs
DFO	District Forestry Office
DO2	Development Objective 2
DOF	Department of Forestry
EAD	Environmental Affairs Department
EC-LEDS	Enhancing Capacity for Low-Emission Development Strategies
EPA	Extension Planning Area
EQ	Evaluation Question
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTF	Feed the Future
FMNR	Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCF	Governor's Climate and Forest Task Force
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GoM	Government of Malawi
GVH	Group Village Head
HA	Hectares
IBTCI	International Business and Technical Consultants, Inc.
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
ILC	International Land Coalition
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
KHP	Kawandama Hills Plantation
KII	Key Informant Interview
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry
MASDAP	Malawi Spatial Data Platform
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MISST	Malawi Improved Seed Systems and Technologies
MRPAP	Malawi REDD+ Action Plan
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
MSU	Michigan State University
MTE	Midterm Evaluation
MWK	Malawian Kwacha
NCS	National Charcoal Strategy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFLRS	National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRS	National Resilience Strategy
OFSP	Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato
PaMawa	Moving into the Future with the Youth
PDNA	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
PE	Performance Evaluation
PERFORM	Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RExG	REDD+ Expert Group
SES	Social and Environmental Safeguards
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TLC	Total LandCare
TSP	Training Support for Partners
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VNRMC	Village Natural Resource Management Committee
VSAL	Village Savings and Loan Association
WRI	World Resources Institute
ZOI	Zone of Influence

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Final Performance Evaluation (PE) of the Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) Activity funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Sustainable Economic Growth. The project period of performance was 2 September 2014 to 1 September 2019. The evaluation was conducted from 24 June 2019 to 28 August 2019 by International Business and Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI).

Evaluation Purpose and Questions

The overall purpose of the PERFORM Final PE is to assess the effectiveness of the PERFORM design and implementation processes, and to inform management regarding effective implementation strategies that support reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and effective natural resource management in Malawi. To this end, the Final PE sought to answer the following evaluation questions:

1. How well has PERFORM achieved its climate change mitigation objectives?
 - a) To what extent has PERFORM succeeded in building the capacity of government institutions at the national and local levels to develop and implement relevant climate change strategies and action plans?
 - b) Have the pilot activities effectively achieved meaningful livelihood and income benefits at the local level to contribute toward reduction of deforestation and forest degradation drivers in the targeted areas?
 - c) Has the project strengthened the linkages between national and local efforts?
 - d) What are USAID's strategic options for future climate change programming in Malawi?
2. What lessons and implications does PERFORM offer for REDD+ readiness scaling up and likely impacts on REDD+ outcomes?
 - a) How effective have PERFORM's efforts to influence the Government of Malawi's (GoM) policy and regulatory environments for climate change been?
3. Has PERFORM's engagement with the private sector to reduce drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and increase local incomes been effective to leverage private sector equity to support viable private sector solutions? Have the activities been profitable and sustainable, can they be scaled up, and if so, how?
4. How effective has PERFORM been in promoting women and youth empowerment and gender equality in its activities?
 - a) How effective was PERFORM in increasing women and youth access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)?

Project Background

PERFORM was a five-year, \$14.9 million USAID contract awarded to US-based TetraTech ARD, with additional implementation support provided by five subcontractors: Total Land Care (TLC), Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA), Michigan State University (MSU), Winrock International, and World Resources Institute (WRI).

The overall objective of the PERFORM activity was to conserve forests and promote green growth in Malawi in alignment with Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), including helping Malawian institutions and communities to manage forest and soil resources more efficiently, equitably, and sustainably. PERFORM is also one of the key activities supporting Development Objective 2 (DO2) of Malawi's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS): sustainable livelihoods increased.

Methods

The PERFORM evaluation team used a mixed-methods approach to generate both qualitative and quantitative primary data. In addition to a desk review of PERFORM documents and data, the evaluation team used 18 key informant interviews (KII) in Lilongwe and the three focal districts of Mzimba (north), Ntchisi (central), and Machinga (south) to target key stakeholders, including Government of Malawi officials, private sector stakeholders, local government, and other donors and civil society organizations. The team also conducted a final field assessment in the focal districts. In order to capture the experiences of community members and the performance of the PERFORM activities implemented, 194 project participants were engaged through nine focus group discussions (FGDs) representing nine different group villages. An additional 36 individuals were randomly sampled through one-on-one interviews as part of a mini survey that generated quantitative findings.

The evaluation team conducted a gender assessment of PERFORM activities and applied a gender lens to each of the Final PE question in order to determine any differential impacts of the project on women. The evaluation team also collected age data in order to determine the extent of youth engagement (10-35 years old) in PERFORM.

Findings and Lessons Learned

The PERFORM Final PE team found evidence of some progress toward key outcomes relevant to EQI, and identified strategic options for future USAID/Malawi programming.

- The PERFORM Final PE team found evidence of attempts to strengthen, revise, or align capacity-building strategies and action plans and the evaluation team found that some stakeholders had identified possible pathways to continue to build on PERFORM achievements. Timely and complete data sharing remains a challenge.
- PERFORM activities in the pilot sites were wide-reaching and encompassed a suite of activities that resulted in meaningful livelihood improvements for over half (55.6%) of PERFORM participants in a mini-survey. The evaluation team also observed evidence that PERFORM activities were adopted by community members outside the project sites or otherwise not targeted by the project.
- While the evaluation team found evidence that PERFORM acted on the MTE recommendation to increase production of marketable commodities, there was limited evidence of PERFORM support to improve market access for project participants outside of the partnership between members of the Lucheche Cooperative and Kawandawa Hill Plantation (KHP).
- The evaluation found that community co-management agreements supported by PERFORM play an important role in starting and maintaining best practices at the local

level that contribute to implementation of national-level strategies. However, there are gaps between national and local legal frameworks, complicating enforcement.

With regard to EQ2:

- The PERFORM MTE recommended that the DoF and other GoM counterparts work with stakeholders to clarify differences between the Malawi REDD+ Action Plan (MRPAP) and the national REDD+ strategy, since there was indication that stakeholders were confused around linking the Plan and Strategy to green growth and the implications of each for economic development in Malawi. The PERFORM final evaluation team found evidence that the project tried to address these recommendations in the second half of implementation.
- PERFORM training and capacity building largely missed two key agencies related to REDD+ readiness and overall resilience planning – the Malawi Department of Surveys, and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs.

Under EQ3, PERFORM supported innovative private sector approaches to reducing degradation. One of the biggest shortcomings of the PERFORM approach identified by institutional stakeholders was that the project could have done more to directly address degradation of Malawi's forests resulting from common, widespread drivers; however, PERFORM had several notable achievements in this regard:

- PERFORM supported adoption of fuel-efficient cookstoves across all project sites via training, reaching nearly 36,000 households and reducing demand for fuel biomass.
- In addition to the completion of the National REDD+ Strategy, PERFORM support for the strengthening and promotion of the GHG-IS among GoM and other stakeholders helped better position these stakeholders to meet the quantitative requirements necessary to access these funds.
- PERFORM directly supported commercial approaches to address deforestation and degradation in line with the objectives of the NCS and NFLRS.

With regard to EQ4 and PERFORM impacts and outcomes for women and youth:

- While the Final PE team was instructed to evaluate outcomes and impacts on both women and youth, the PERFORM program design lacked an explicit emphasis on youth. The team did find evidence of youth engagement through clan-based approaches to natural resource management in their communities and schools.
- The evaluation team found significant evidence that PERFORM worked to engage women across the suite of project activities, and women were the majority recipients of PERFORM support.
- The evaluation team found no evidence of direct PERFORM support for women to market and sell agricultural products produced as a result of PERFORM activities.
- VSLAs were established across PERFORM sites with project support, though the evaluation team did not note any direct evidence of improved livelihood outcomes.
- Overall, the evaluation team found no evidence of any adverse impacts on women or youth resulting from PERFORM activities.

Recommendations for Future Programming

The evaluation team developed the following recommendations as a result of the findings of the PERFORM final performance evaluation:

- Support implementation and scaling of interventions in project sites, focused on integrated approaches that combines best practices to address evidence-based challenges and opportunities at scale.
- Promote seed-saving and storage practices and technology.
- Put more programmatic emphasis on directly addressing the degradation resulting from fuelwood collection and charcoal production in project sites.
- Build on PERFORM success engaging communities at the traditional authority level by using traditional authorities as an entry point to address degradation and promote livelihood opportunities on customary lands.
- Working with Government of Malawi stakeholders, support harmonization of local and national-level enforcement and penalties for illegal forest activities.
- Support private sector producers of low emission and/or sustainable products in obtaining certifications of sustainability.
- Develop “big picture” program design that engages diverse stakeholders in a system of “checks and balances” to build mutually-reinforcing confidence in other stakeholders and in program interventions.
- Come to the table to “build the stocks” in the social sector and support diagnostic studies of the social, infrastructure, and productive sectors to determine what is wrong with these sectors and why wide-spread impacts from climate-related disasters persist.
- Support the continued development and implementation of the National Climate Change Fund, including full sectoral involvement, application of the GHG-IS, options for co-finance, and the ability of potential grantees to access funds.
- Close the loop on market access for women to enable women to sell non-timber forest products and agricultural products from their homestead gardens, including increasing market awareness of products and varieties produced with PERFORM support.

1.0 Project Background

1.1 PERFORM Activity: Objective and Approach

PERFORM (Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi) is a five-year project (2 September 2014 – 1 September 2019) specifically designed to align with Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and to promote forest conservation and green growth. PERFORM is one of the key activities under "Development Objective 2 (DO2): Sustainable Livelihoods Increased" of USAID/Malawi's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). PERFORM is also the flagship implementation vehicle for whole-of-government Enhancing Capacity for Low Emission Development Strategies (EC-LEDS) partnership between the US and the Government of Malawi.

Malawi's current policy and economic environment is contributing to rapid losses in forest cover, as well as significant soil loss resulting from erosion and overall degraded soil quality. PERFORM was intended to deliver pro-poor solutions that are equitable and sustainable, focusing on natural resource security and co-benefits to communities resulting from conservation efforts. PERFORM was predicated on an ecosystem-based Theory of Change; ecosystem services are central to Malawi's development trajectory, as well as the wellbeing of its citizens, and it was hypothesized that addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation will promote both natural resource conservation and green growth. In addition to three project-specific objectives and two cross-cutting objectives in support of Malawi's CDCS (below), anticipated outcomes from PERFORM in support of the MGDS included increased forest cover; increased incomes from forestry products and services; improved equitable access to land and tenure security; improved, ecologically-balanced land planning, use, and management; improved provision of geospatial information; and improved climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

To accomplish the project's goal of helping Malawian institutions and communities conserve forests and promote green growth, PERFORM sought to address drivers of deforestation and provide alternative livelihood opportunities, including through potential results-based payments associated with the international REDD+ framework. PERFORM also sought to build capacity at the national and local levels to implement REDD+ and forest landscape restoration while helping the Government of Malawi to meet its international commitments, such as those under the UNFCCC.

Specifically, PERFORM implemented activities under the project's five interconnected objectives, which include three PERFORM-specific objectives (Objectives 1-3) and two cross-cutting objectives (Objectives 4 and 5):

1. REDD+ readiness: Improving the capacity of government, private sector, academia, civil society, and local stakeholders to analyze, implement, and monitor sustainable land management practices, including REDD+; MRV, and social and environmental safeguards (SES);

2. Low-emissions land use opportunities in targeted geographies: Creating and implementing evidence-based approaches and best practices for sustainable land management systems that reduce local emissions from land use and land use change (LULC) and improve livelihood co-benefits from conservation in three pilot districts, and that are scalable to the national level;
3. Low-emissions development capacities are improved: Promoting benefit-sharing mechanisms that are efficiently, equitably, and sustainably aligned through REDD+ and SES to support sustainable land management practices at the local and national levels and across stakeholder groups, including women and youth;
4. Pathways for sustainability are instituted: Using PERFORM as a platform to leverage other investments, whether through PPPs, international climate finance mechanisms, payments for environmental services (PES) and other results-based payments, co-location, coordination, and collaboration;
5. CDCS priorities of integration and institutional strengthening.

PERFORM was implemented by Tetra Tech ARD, in association with five subcontractors: Total Land Care (TLC), Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA), Michigan State University (MSU), Winrock International, and World Resources Institute (WRI).

I.2 PERFORM Target Geographies

PERFORM was primarily a capacity building activity at the national level (Objective 1, 3, 4 and 5). PERFORM targeted five districts in Malawi for site-based pilot activity implementation. These include Machinga, Mzimba, Lilongwe, Dowa, and Ntchisi. Within these districts, PERFORM's activities are anchored by the Liwonde Forest Reserve and Liwonde National Park (Machinga), Perekezi Forest Reserve (Mzimba), Ntchisi Forest Reserve (Ntchisi), and Thuma Forest Reserve (Lilongwe) (Figure 1).

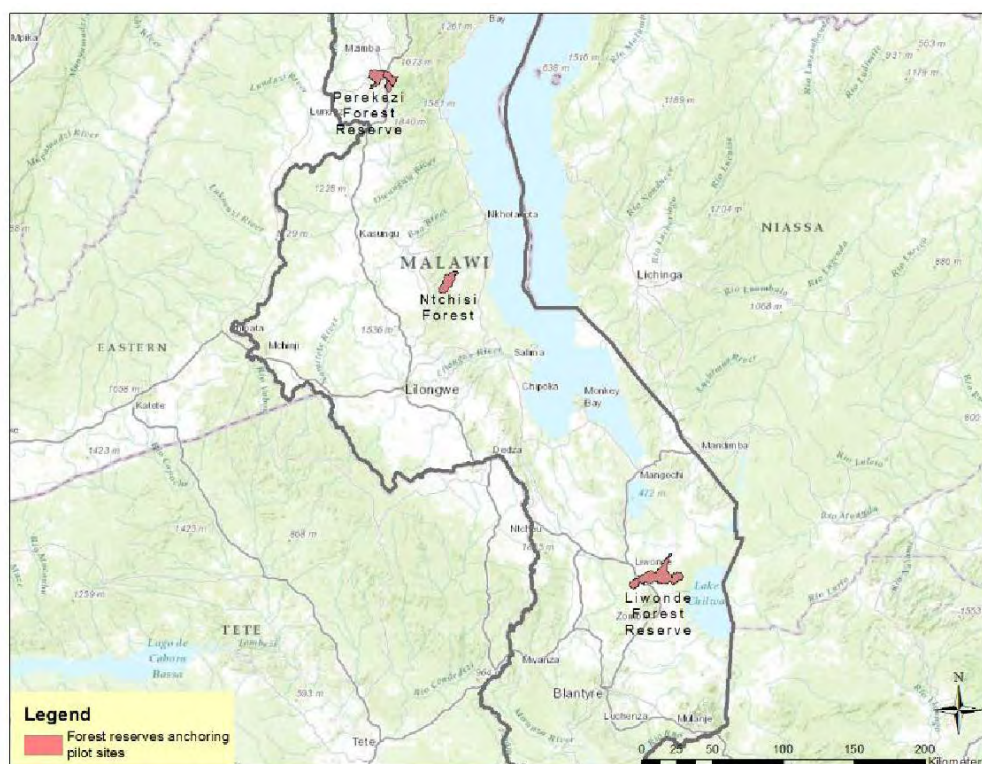


Figure 1 PERFORM pilot sites in Malawi

2.0 Evaluation Methods and Limitations

The final evaluation of the PERFORM activity provides an analysis of PERFORM’s effectiveness and provides lessons learned and recommendations to inform future strategic planning. To arrive at its findings and conclusions, the evaluation team relied on three main components: a desk review of PERFORM data and reporting, as well as other secondary sources; a field assessment, where data was collected through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, a mini survey, and direct observations of project activities; and a gender analysis that cut across evaluation questions. While the evaluation team did face some limitations due to political demonstrations, in carrying out its intended work plan, all evaluation activities were completed, and any impact resulting from these limitations was negligible.

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The primary purpose of this final performance evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the PERFORM design and implementation processes, and to inform management regarding effective implementation strategies that support reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and effective resources management in Malawi.

Specifically, this evaluation is intended to:

- I. Review, analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the PERFORM activity in achieving program objectives and contributing to USAID/Malawi’s efforts on climate change mitigation and adaptation in Malawi;

2. Evaluate major constraints in achieving expected project results;
3. Provide specific recommendations and lessons learned on strategies and approaches USAID/Malawi should continue in its future climate change mitigation activities; and
4. Look at whether findings, recommendations, and lessons learned from the mid-term evaluation were taken into account during the remainder of the implementation period, and if so, what the impact was of any course corrections that were taken.

To answer the evaluation questions and assess the performance of the PERFORM activity; the evaluation team applied three complementary methods for the Final PE, including a desk review, final field assessment, and a gender assessment. During the field assessment, the team relied on nine FGDs in the three PERFORM focal districts, key informant interviews, and mini survey, and direct observation of PERFORM activities in different project sites. 194 community members participated in the FGDs across the three districts, including lead farmers; members of village natural resource management committees (VNRMC); local leaders (village and group village heads); community extension workers; cooperative members; and, in Ntchisi, a few participants in an irrigation scheme. Four FGDs were held in Mzimba, with 58 total participants. In Ntchisi, 36 community members participated in two FGDs, while in Machinga, 100 people attended three FGDs. For the mini survey, 12 individuals were randomly sampled in each district, with a few sampled from each of the nine communities visited, for a total of 36.

In order to be able to better compare and contrast results and performance outcomes, the evaluation team used triangulation via this mixed methods approach in order to answer each of the PERFORM Final PE evaluation questions, which provides greater confidence in findings related to trends while help identifying outliers within and between PERFORM project sites. The team compared and contrasted data collected in the field with qualitative and quantitative data provided in PERFORM progress reports, baseline studies, and other reporting to analyze the efficacy of project activities and the extent to which PERFORM delivered on the project's objectives and expected outcomes. Triangulation also helped the evaluation team minimize bias that may have resulted from any one evaluation method.

The Final PE is intended to expand on the Mid-Term PE conducted in 2017, which reviewed PERFORM performance, assessed the ways in which project activities were contributing to the achievement of PERFORM objectives, and provided recommendations to improve programming in the second half of the project. Findings and recommendations from the Mid-Term PE were considered as part of the Final PE analysis to examine progress and achievements throughout the life of PERFORM.

The evaluation team's analysis of data from secondary and primary sources used the following analytical methodologies:

- Examination of outliers (explaining differences in performance among project sites)
- Variance analysis (actual versus what was proposed)
- Identification of successes and best practices
- Assessment of factors leading to limited/unsatisfactory performance
- Process and methodological limitations

The evaluation team designed and used three different data collection instruments to target key informants and community project participants – included in Annex V – to guide primary data

collection. These instruments were adapted as necessary throughout the field assessment to fit the context of the field site location and stakeholder involvement with PERFORM activities. A deductive approach was used for the qualitative analysis; the evaluation questions and PERFORM Results Framework guided the analysis of the KII and FGD data. Data was coded and grouped according to similar or related pieces of information presented. This process allowed the organization and comparison of related pieces of information to identify key themes across various data sources and inform the evaluation findings. Further triangulation and data analysis was conducted using the data generated through the mini-survey of PERFORM participants.

In terms of the characteristics of the sample reached by the data collection activities in the field, the PERFORM Final PE team sought to cover a representative sample that considered the specific social, cultural and demographic aspects contained in each of the three PERFORM focal districts. To achieve this, the evaluation team employed both purposive and random sampling (see below). Sampling tracked the scope and nature of the activities undertaken by PERFORM, with variable numbers of participants when using a group format.

The PERFORM Final PE team worked with District Forestry Offices in each PERFORM focal district in order to coordinate evaluation activities in the PERFORM sites, particularly organizing community members for FGDs, the mini survey, and direct observations of project activities. Though the evaluation team was able to determine the location of the evaluation activities and guide DFOs in how to sensitize community members on these activities, participants in FGDs ultimately self-selected. Because the evaluation team anticipated that more men than women might participate in FGDs due to the timing of the FGDs and the fact that women were more likely to be engaged in day-to-day domestic tasks, purposive sampling was employed for the mini survey in order to ensure that at least 50% of survey respondents were women. This allowed the evaluation team to better isolate the experiences of women and their challenges and opportunities, and provided women with a more confidential space to speak about their experience with PERFORM in case their responses may have been modified or omitted in the presence of men or other community members more generally.

2.2 Component 1: Desk Review

The evaluation team conducted a desk review of key documents and materials related to PERFORM project activities, including an in-depth analysis of quantitative and qualitative PERFORM monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and performance indicator data collected by Tetra Tech and partners. Key documents include: annual work plans; quarterly reports; workshop and event summaries; training and outreach materials; and research reports, inventories, and assessments developed by PERFORM partners. The desk review also included secondary sources, such as publicly-available research reports and journal articles, as well as reports obtained from other donors/development partners during the course of the final evaluation. A complete list of documents reviewed for the evaluation is included in Annex III. Content analysis of these documents allowed the team to track progress towards project outcomes, link project activities to the evaluation questions, inform the field assessment components of the methodology, and identify and prioritize primary data collection activities.

2.3 Component 2: Final Field Assessment

The PERFORM evaluation team conducted a field assessment in the three perform focal districts (Machinga, Ntchisi, Mzimba) as part of the final evaluation. This assessment included in-person interviews with individuals, focus group discussions, a mini survey of project participants, and, to the extent possible, direct observation of project activities. The evaluation team worked with the PERFORM team to develop a list of key contacts relevant to each focal district.

Project/pilot site visits allowed the evaluation team to meet with and interview direct project participants, verify activities and outcomes, and observe first-hand progress towards program goals and objectives, including triangulation with PERFORM's baseline reporting in the three sites. KIIs consisted of semi-structured, qualitative, in-depth interviews with stakeholders identified based on their specialized knowledge of PERFORM project activities. The team used both the FGDs and KIIs to collect detailed information from project participants, stakeholders, and partners on specific topics relevant for the Final PERFORM PE evaluation questions. The team identified and selected key informants and FGD participants based on the advice of the PERFORM team and the team's identification of important stakeholders throughout the desk review.¹

The PERFORM Final PE team conducted FGDs in nine communities representing nine different group villages. Four FGDs took place in Mzimba, with two in Ntchisi and three in Mzimba. A total of 194 community members (106 men, 88 women) participated in the evaluation across the nine FGDs. In each of the nine communities, an additional three to four people were randomly sampled via mini-survey, for a total of 12 people in each of the three PERFORM districts. While the sampling for the mini survey was random overall, the evaluation team did take steps to ensure that women were at least half of the individuals sampled in order to better represent their participation in PERFORM and generate a more complete picture of their opportunities and challenges. However, gender was the only basis for this sampling, and women were otherwise randomly selected for participation from among other women.

2.4 Component 3: Gender and Youth Assessment

The gender assessment component of the PERFORM Final PE considers the differential impacts of the PERFORM activity on men and women with respect to their participation in, and influence on, project activities, and their respective ability to access PERFORM-generated project benefits. The assessment also seeks to understand whether or not project activities generated any unintended positive or negative outcomes on women as compared to men. To support the gender assessment, the team designed the data collection tools utilized during site visits to capture the perspectives and experiences of both men and women. Aligned with USAID policy, all data collected by the PE team was sex-disaggregated. Finally, throughout the desk review content analysis, the team paid special attention to sex-disaggregated content and data regarding project activities in relation to women. The team formulated gender-specific programming recommendations based on the findings of the gender assessment.

¹ A detailed list of the FGDs and KIIs conducted by the evaluation team for the Final PERFORM PE is included in Annex IV.

The Evaluation Questions for the PERFORM Final PE include a youth component.² While the implementation team did not provide age-disaggregated data (nor was there a mandate to do so), the evaluation team did work to collect age data for PERFORM project participants and incorporate analysis of PERFORM impacts on youth to the extent possible, generally grouping youth into “school-aged” and “non-school aged.”

The scope of work for the PERFORM final evaluation specifies that the evaluation team should ensure that data is gender disaggregated and subject to gender analysis. The PERFORM PMEP also specifies that annual gender assessments took place, as well as real-time, ongoing review of gender-disaggregated data. In addition to incorporating analysis of gender and youth participation in the other components of the evaluation, the evaluation team utilized a brief analytical framework for gender equity in order to consider the impacts of the PERFORM activity on women. The evaluation considered different dimensions of gender equity: distributional equity, procedural equity, and contextual equity. When designing the evaluation tools, the Final PE team considered the influence of gender equity dimensions on things like benefit sharing mechanisms; full and effective participation, consultation, and decision-making; opportunities and constraints for women; and worked to identify existing inequities, including gaps in skills and knowledge between men and women.

The team used a mixed-methods approach to analyzing project performance through a gender lens, as well as to understand project outcomes as they affect men and women. The analysis draws upon the equity framework to understand how men and women have participated in and benefitted from PERFORM interventions. Specifically, the evaluation team sought to determine the extent to which PERFORM successfully incorporated a gender perspective into program activities. This included, but was not limited to, which PERFORM tasks and resources were assigned to men and women; who was responsible for delivering PERFORM messaging; and the extent to which gendered influence of PERFORM staff is reflected in project documents and project design. The evaluation team also considered what changes could be made concerning gender in order to enhance future USAID programming and implementation, including better incorporation of gender concerns throughout the project process, opportunities to increase gender equity, and how to better engage any stakeholders that may have felt excluded from PERFORM project processes and activities.

In order to verify gender-related findings of the PERFORM Final PE, the evaluation team used secondary data, primarily in the form of PERFORM planning and monitoring/reporting documents. The team also used a number of primary data sources to verify gender findings, including interviews with PERFORM project staff, the Government of Malawi, and NGOs; FGDs and a mini survey, and a sample field check of PERFORM reports/direct observation of PERFORM activities in the three project focal districts.

Because Evaluation Question 4 focuses so closely on gender equality and impacts of PERFORM activities, the gender analysis for the PERFORM Final PE can be found in Section 3.7 of this report.

2.6 Evaluation Limitations

² “Youth” is defined in Malawi’s National Youth Policy as boys and girls between the ages of 10-35 years old.

The PERFORM Final PE team faced a small number of limitations in completing the evaluation of the PERFORM activity, though the overall impact on the analysis resulting from these limitations is negligible.

In general, the evaluation team was limited by the amount of time available to complete evaluation activities, particularly in Malawi. While the team was able to complete its intended schedule of activities on a slightly amended timeline due to factors outside the team's control (see below), the evaluation (as with most evaluations that have a defined time period) would have benefitted from more time to conduct a deeper dive into PERFORM activities, particularly in the project sites.

Most notably, the evaluation team dealt with the ongoing unrest and political uncertainty stemming from Malawi's most recent national election in May 2019. During the first half of the team's time together in country, there were demonstrations in Lilongwe and several other cities around the country that resulted in violence and property damage, including damage to many buildings in the center of Lilongwe. In anticipation of these demonstrations, many offices were closed for several days, forcing the evaluation team to reschedule some key informant interviews and other evaluation activities. Ultimately, only two key informant interviews in Lilongwe were negatively impacted as a result of demonstrations, and the PERFORM team was unable to conduct these interviews in person. It should also be noted that a small number of key informants had either transitioned out of the roles they had held during PERFORM implementation, while a smaller number indicated that they lacked the appropriate background on PERFORM to be able to feel comfortable participating in evaluation activities. However, the evaluation team is satisfied that the key informant interviews conducted capture a breadth and depth of stakeholders for a comprehensive sample of PERFORM participants.

Challenges and constraints to the PERFORM MTE outside the control of the PERFORM team also limited the applicability of the findings and recommendations of the MTE in the final evaluation process, as well as the ability of PERFORM to engage in any programming modifications or course-corrections based on those findings. The PERFORM team did not receive the MTE report until nearly the end of the first quarter of FY2018. Because the PERFORM FY2018 Annual Work Plan had already been submitted to and approved by USAID/Malawi, the PERFORM team was only able to consider the findings and recommendations from the MTE report for FY2019, the final year of the project. Therefore, any references in the FPE report made to midterm results and the extent to which PERFORM improved on these should consider the relatively limited amount of time the PERFORM team had to implement any changes. In addition to the delays in contracting the MTE, challenges with the performance of the PERFORM MTE team resulted in further delays and caused the quality of the MTE report to suffer.

Since PERFORM did not collect data on the age of participants in project activities, there was no way for the evaluation team to properly assess the ages of those involved, or how the project performed in terms of youth engagement and empowerment (most relevant to Evaluation Question 4). Collection of age-disaggregated activity data, or programming specifically aimed toward youth cohorts, were not part of the PERFORM scope of work. However, PERFORM did work to engage youth on a limited basis, primarily through school clubs and, to a lesser extent, in collaboration with the USAID-funded PaMawa (Moving into the

Future with the Youth – PaMawa ndi a Chinyamata) beginning in 2017.³ The evaluation team took all steps possible to consider project impacts on youth, including collecting age data for participants in FGDs and the mini survey, and highlight evidence of youth engagement in PERFORM activities, but there was significantly greater focus on women under PERFORM, which is reflected in both the data collected by and reported on by the project, and the findings of the evaluation team.

Overall, while the PERFORM Final PE team found the quality of the data provided by the project to be good, with strong emphasis on gender-disaggregated data, there is far more qualitative than quantitative data available for analysis. Beyond the quantitative data generated in the field by the evaluation team as a result of the evaluation activities, none of the sites visited yielded additional, useful quantitative data or access to locally kept records. Key informant interviews conducted as part of the evaluation were useful for sensitizing the evaluation team to new sources of reporting and empirical data generated outside the scope of PERFORM, and the team received a small number of relevant reports and data that informed the evaluation's findings and recommendations for future USAID programming.

The team selected site visit locations based on PERFORM project documents and recommendations from Tetra Tech; the PERFORM Final PE team felt consultation with the Tetra Tech team was important since there were no PERFORM staff remaining in the project sites due to project closeout, making it more challenging to identify and locate some key stakeholders. To reduce potential bias and contribute to an objective assessment of the PERFORM activity, the PERFORM evaluation team also independently identified additional stakeholders to interview during site visits.

Given that five years have elapsed since the program start at the PERFORM Final PE, there was an expectation that the evaluation team may encounter some recall bias resulting in potential misattribution of activities not supported by PERFORM to the project, or vice versa. The evaluation team took steps to mitigate this bias in the design of the data collection tools and was able to use triangulation to appropriately attribute PERFORM activities and identify complementary yet separate activities from other donors or funding streams. One way this was achieved, in an attempt to improve on the data collection of the midterm, was to use a mini-survey targeting community participants in PERFORM activities. Overall, the evaluation team found that PERFORM activities were discrete enough that both key informants and community participants were able to clearly differentiate between PERFORM and other support.

The evaluation team also considered potential response bias in designing and carrying out the evaluation methodology. While the evaluation team emphasized in its introductions during KIs and FGDs that the team represented an objective third party separate from both USAID and Tetra Tech, and provided a high-level description of the purpose of the evaluation and how it related to activities engaged in by community members, it is possible that some respondents limited or altered their responses if they did not have a clear understanding of who the evaluation team was representing, or its objectives. However, the evaluation team found

³ PERFORM intended to collaborate with PaMawa on behavior change related to climate change adaptation, which was intended to compliment the Activity's focus on sexual and reproductive health. Specifically, PERFORM was going to provide tools and technical support for low emission livelihood opportunities. However, challenges in securing land tenure for target participants limited PERFORM's ability to carry out its objectives in this regard, and the evaluation team did not find any direct evidence of PERFORM-supported outcomes related to this partnership.

community members were willing to engage in constructive criticism of project activities and implementation and feels that overall response bias among FGD and mini-survey participants was limited. The evaluation team did not see any overt evidence among key informants of avoidance of direct criticism of PERFORM activities, implementation and outcome, nor were there any significantly divergent views about either the PERFORM project itself or other institutional groups or stakeholders. Key informants that participated in the evaluation were also able to point to specific project outcomes that provided a legitimate basis for their assessment of PERFORM interventions.

3.0 Findings and Lessons Learned

3.1 Evaluation Question 1: Relevant PERFORM Approach

The first focus area of the PERFORM activity was to improve knowledge, systems and policy for forest management and greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting towards REDD+ readiness and low emissions development for Malawi. Participatory approaches, promotion of innovation and learning, and a focus on sustainable landscapes-linked livelihood benefits were used to improve knowledge and capacity within the Government of Malawi and Malawian civil society organizations at national, district, and community levels, and to strengthen the linkages between local and national efforts.

EQ1: How well has PERFORM achieved its climate change mitigation objectives?

Activities implemented under this focus area were designed to contribute to sustainable, efficient, and equitable forest and soil resource use and management for Malawi by integrating landscape and low-emissions approaches into the country's development priorities

To answer EQ1, the evaluation team assessed the results and performance of PERFORM activities related to the following approaches:

- Advancing REDD+ readiness for Malawi through capacity building for the National Forest Management Strategy and support for the development of the National REDD+ Strategy;
- Supporting the development and implementation of the National Charcoal strategy and National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy, and creating linkages with the National Restoration Strategy (NRS);
- Providing community-level support to facilitate decentralized forest/land management and increase sustainable intensification and livelihood opportunities through site-based pilot activities, using a suite of tailored interventions that address both supply- and demand-side drivers of deforestation;

Activities evaluated under EQ1 are most closely linked to PERFORM Outcome 2 (Low-emissions land use opportunities in targeted geographies increased)⁴ and PERFORM Outcome 3 (Low emissions development capacities improved).⁵

3.2 Evaluation Question 1: Findings

3.2.1 Capacity building for implementation

PERFORM's approach to capacity building was centered on working closely with Malawian institutions to assess capacity gaps and develop corresponding training plans for local/district and national level trainings. PERFORM provided cross-cutting support to government institutions, such as the Department of Forestry and the Environmental Affairs Department, civil society organizations like CEPA, and community-level organizations, such as local forestry organizations, to improve their capacity to improve knowledge, systems, and policies. Attempts by the GoM to begin coordinating on climate change did not begin in earnest until as recently as 2010, and the evaluation team noted that there are still many opportunities for improved collaboration, cross-sectoral planning, and to begin transitioning away from policy formulation and revision into actual implementation.

Malawi has conducted four national GHG inventories, but the process had not yet been institutionalized. PERFORM advanced the institutionalization of the process by identifying national focal points in relevant departments (in line with 2006 IPCC guidelines) and brought department coordinators together to work with sectoral focal points; trainings for sectoral focal points supported by PERFORM are what enabled the GHG-IS to be operationalized to actually support the development of the inventories. While GHG data was primarily meant for the National System, it was highlighted by some stakeholders that the inventory data produced has the potential to be used in the development of other national and district policies and strategies, if widely shared.

It is unclear how much capacity around the GHG inventory will be retained now that PERFORM is complete; as determined through interviews with Government of Malawi (GoM) stakeholders, the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) ultimately does not have the budget capacity to continue updating the GHG inventory, or to contribute to the operationalization of the National REDD+ Strategy. PERFORM had a heavy emphasis on capacity building, but there is a clear need for GoM stakeholders to feel empowered to implement in line with various national-level strategies. The Forestry Department, for example, intends to propose the NFI as part of their budget at intervals. As discussed elsewhere in the report, greater engagement of the academic community could help bridge gaps in making the case for the GoM to invest in climate change, and to replace opinion-driven decision-making and planning with evidence-based approaches.

Overall, the PERFORM Final PE team found more evidence of attempts to strengthen, revise, or align strategies and action plans. Apart from support for capacity building, PERFORM had

⁴ Sub-outcomes for PERFORM Outcome 2: Decentralized forest/land management improved; livelihood opportunities from conservation expanded; forest cover increased.

⁵ Sub-outcomes for PERFORM Outcome 3: GHG data management capabilities improved; Government of Malawi-owned GHG inventory management system operationalized; capacity for implementing mitigation options increased

limited time for implementation support for the institutions, systems, strategies and plans it established.

3.2.2 Pilot activities

PERFORM's site-based REDD+ pilot activities were intended to use a suite of tailored interventions that address both the supply- and demand-side drivers of deforestation in Mzimba, Machinga, and Ntchisi. Activities ranged from beekeeping and poultry rearing to conservation agriculture, irrigation, and crop diversification. The evaluation team sought to determine if PERFORM had delivered meaningful livelihood benefits (whether monetary or non-monetary) as a result of implementing pilot activities in these three districts. The Department of Forestry was also dissatisfied with how communities adopted prior EU-supported interventions in the same target areas, so there was an expectation that activities and outcomes in the PERFORM sites would improve on earlier shortcomings.

The evaluation team found a high level of awareness of the PERFORM project and its specific activities among communities and other stakeholders in the pilot sites, with 100% of respondents indicating familiarity with the PERFORM activity; respondents were generally comfortable attributing specific activities to PERFORM support, and were able to differentiate between PERFORM interventions and interventions supported by other donors and development partners.

Across pilot sites in three districts, community members were able to recall 17 discrete activities promoted by PERFORM, with at least one respondent having participated in each activity. Despite widespread knowledge of and participation in PERFORM activities, respondents did not report receiving livelihood benefits to the same degree. 58.3% of 36 respondents to a mini survey conducted by the evaluation team in all three sites indicated that they received some kind of non-monetary livelihood support under PERFORM, but the remaining 41.7% indicated that they did not receive livelihood support of any kind. When asked if PERFORM had resulted in "meaningful" livelihood benefits (including increased household income), 55.6% of respondents said that yes, it had. The most commonly cited activities among the three project sites that contributed to meaningful livelihood benefits were access to beehives, support for irrigated agriculture, pass-on approaches to goat and chicken rearing, promotion of village savings and loans, and the distribution of OFSP vines. Respondents indicated that these activities contributed to improved household food security and increases in household incomes. Furthermore, the evaluation team did observe evidence that activities modeled by PERFORM were taken up by community members outside the project sites. The pass-on approach for OFSP was one activity that the evaluation team observed as having impact outside the PERFORM sites.



Figure 2 PERFORM participants at a FGD in Chinjoka Chirwa.

Performance in the pilot sites was augmented by collaboration with other NGO and USAID/Malawi initiatives, and PERFORM integrated livelihood activities with the International Potato Center (CIP), the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), USAID/Malawi's Malawi Improved Seed Systems and Technologies (MISST) and the Agriculture Diversification (AgDiv) activity under Feed the Future (FTF). However, interviews with Department of Forestry staff revealed concern that there had not been full implementation of PERFORM interventions in the pilot sites, and that there is a risk of losing community momentum in part because PERFORM had not discussed an exit strategy with the DoF. District forestry offices also indicated that communication waned in the latter half of PERFORM to the extent that it was sometimes difficult to keep track of project activities, with DFOs becoming aware of project activities in their districts after they had already taken place.

The MTE recommended that, in order to increase cash incomes for farmers, PERFORM should continue its efforts to increase the production of marketable commodities, and that PERFORM should consider significantly ramping up planned efforts to pool farmer products and sell in great volume through local farmer organizations. The MTE also recommended that the project consider expanding the use of the KHP citronella outgrower scheme to other high value cash crops through private sector partners.

During the second half of PERFORM, project activities emphasized crop diversification, including the promotion of high value cash crops like sunflower, macadamia (via Highland Macadamia Cooperative Union Limited), coffee (via the Ntichisi Coffee Cooperative), Kilombero rice, and small-scale livestock. PERFORM also provided focused support for more than 79 women-oriented village savings and loan associations (VSAL).

The evaluation team received conflicting information about the KHP outgrower scheme



becoming self-sustaining as a result of community seed collection and the ability to raise seedlings in addition to those supplied from KHP nurseries. While some PERFORM documentation indicates that this did occur, when the evaluation team visited the Lucheche Cooperative, it was clear that community members were interested in having the opportunity to cultivate citronella on their land without having to source their seeds from KHP. However, a focus group discussion with cooperative members indicated that they do not currently have the capacity to collect, save and adequately store seeds, and establish seedlings or sprouts in order to scale the activities supported by PERFORM. If community members were instilled with the capacity to save and store seeds and get seedlings started in a nursery, they may be able to help overcome the resource gap faced

by KHP in wanting to engage more outgrowers but not being able to provide inputs to meet the demand to participate. However, an emphasis on high-quality seed is needed, including a deeper understanding of the quality of local seed and opportunities to become less reliant on seed imports. Community members in other PERFORM sites also indicated that collecting and storing seeds and propagating them represented a challenge to sustainability and scalability of activities. For more information on the Lucheche Cooperative's involvement with KHP and PERFORM in the second half of the project, see Section 3.6.2.

While the evaluation team found evidence that PERFORM acted on the MTE recommendation to increase production of marketable commodities, there was limited evidence of PERFORM support to improve market access for project participants outside of the partnership between members of the Lucheche Cooperative and KHP. The PERFORM Final PE team did find an

entrepreneurial environment in Mjojo Mhlanga (Mzimba), where PERFORM participants mobilized into groups to discuss and explore various livelihood options. Working as a group and sometimes with the support of field coordinators (PERFORM staff), community members were able to explore markets for different products as a group and decide on the most viable options. PERFORM also helped facilitate transactions by identifying buyers and encouraging them to travel to the Mjojo Mhlanga area to purchase honey. Participants that pursued beekeeping and the sale of honey with PERFORM support for market access found that being able to pool their product as a group resulted in a better price of 1,200 MWK (\$1.66 USD)/500 ml (compared with 1,000 MWK/\$1.38 USD per 500 ml in PERFORM project sites like Samson-Shumba, where participants received support for beekeeping but did not receive support to improve market access or facilitate transactions). Samson-Shumba did have a similar non-PERFORM intervention implemented by World Vision, which supported the creation of a storehouse for community members to pool the groundnuts they produce to improve their market access and bargaining power.

The evaluation team also found instances where women that participated in PERFORM activities either wanted to bring their products to market but could not due to a lack of marketability, or took matters into their own hands and created income-generating opportunities without direct PERFORM intervention, sometimes pooling what they produced to increase their offerings. For more on marketable commodities and livelihood impacts to women under PERFORM, see Section 3.8.1.

3.2.3 Local and national linkages

In addition to supporting the development of national strategies, policies, and other regulatory instruments, PERFORM worked with District Councils and local leaders in Mzimba, Ntchisi, and Machinga to develop Forest Reserve Co-Management Agreements and Management Plans. These legal agreements define the management roles and responsibilities for each party (Department of Forestry, District Councils, and traditional leaders), and provide guidelines for what the agreements are intended to achieve, how they will be carried out, governing laws and guiding principles, and conditions and procedures for suspension and/or termination of the agreement, if deemed necessary and appropriate. Community co-management agreements provide an important basis for starting and maintaining best practices at the local level that contribute to the implementation and achievement of national-level strategies and goals related to agriculture, forestry, and other land uses (AFOLU), reforestation and landscape restoration, resilience to and mitigation against climate change, and green growth. PERFORM also enhanced communication between national and sub-national offices on forest management during the development of Forest Management Plans and Forest Co-Management Agreements, and more generally around the implementation of low emission and sustainable livelihood activities.

Because the national Forest Act makes enforcement in forest reserves the responsibility of government, PERFORM also supported the development of by-laws at the District Council level, though by PERFORM closeout the district by-laws for Mzimba had not been completed. However, PERFORM participants in a FGD in Mjojo Mhlanga reported the existence of new by-laws that are mutually agreed upon by and applicable to the Mzimba district forestry office, the district council, and the communities themselves. And while not linked all the way to the national level, participants in this FGD also reported that PERFORM helped communities strengthen linkages to “higher-level decision-makers at the district level,” including the DFO,

district council, and police, and that PERFORM empowered the community to make the case to police about why punishment and enforcement of forest crimes is important.

Despite enforcement being the purview of government, government agencies like the Department of Forestry remain unclear about who is mandated to actually develop the by-laws. While the evaluation team did see evidence overall that PERFORM refocused its efforts on enforcement during the second half of the project, there are still some key gaps between national and local legal frameworks which complicates enforcement. There is a clear need to reconcile national and local enforcement efforts to standardize penalties so that they are consistent between local level agreements and by-laws and the national Forestry Act. According to the Deputy Director of Land Resources, there is an expectation that enforcement will improve because it can now be evidence-based - due in part to PERFORM support.

Overall, the final evaluation team found incremental progress on enforcement, however community members interviewed for the final PE still found punishment and enforcement in their communities insufficient. All but one of the project participants in the three pilot districts that responded to the final evaluation survey indicated that community forest patrols and punitive punishments for charcoal production in forests reserves have greatly decreased the number of offenders. However, lax enforcement of punishments emboldens perpetrators (many project participants interviewed by the FPE team think current penalties are not stiff enough to serve as a deterrent, and that punishment should even extend to buyers of illegally produced charcoal) and has made community members feel like their concerns lack legitimacy, which is reinforced in practice because of the disconnect between national and local enforcement. In the case of Mzukubola Task Force in Chinjoka Chirwa, community members patrol on a schedule and have cut out the middleman of the police, choosing instead to fine offenders directly. While task force members report that this approach is working better, it is still not sufficient to curtail illegal charcoal production in Perekezi, and there are multiple repeat offenders within the surrounding communities.

The PERFORM Final PE observed that a potential disconnect between national and local efforts may be the inability of current institutional arrangements to be flexible to alternative geographies or other “innovations;” for example, at the national level, much of the thinking around strategy implementation is stuck at the district block level, when in reality it may be more practical to consider implementation at other scales (for example, working at the catchment scale, or within areas under the leadership of traditional authorities, as PERFORM did in Ntichisi and Perekezi).

3.2.4 Strategic Options for Future Climate Change Programming in Malawi

As part of EQ I, the evaluation team was asked to identify strategic options for future climate change programming in Malawi. The team found that there is a clear shift taking place away from site-specific reforestation and/or REDD+ approaches among Government of Malawi agencies and departments, NGOs, and other donors like the World Bank and UNDP, and toward catchment/watershed scale approaches; multiple stakeholders attributed this shift in

thinking in large part to the findings of the 2016 *Soil Loss Assessment in Malawi*,⁶ while others cited major recent flooding (including the Malawi 2019 Floods Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Report (PDNA)),⁷ and a general lack of upstream/downstream implementation at scale that adequately considers climate change resilience and disaster risk reduction in Malawi. Piecemeal, pilot-based approaches make it difficult for both government and communities to see the impact, and the evaluation team saw evidence that communities are already thinking at catchment scale.

Landscape/watershed scale approaches can also play an important role in safeguarding donor investments; according to the World Bank, a lack of disaster risk management approaches during and after Malawi's most recent severe floods in 2019 destroyed all of the Bank's investments in infrastructure. Furthermore, site-based approaches to things like flood prevention supported by donors thus far have been insufficient to mitigate risk, simply pushing flooding from one community to another, and there are no systems-based approaches to attempt to link these disparate efforts. The extent and severity of catchment-scale issues in Malawi is massive, and site-based solutions will be insufficient to address these challenges at a meaningful scale; catchments need to be approached with a "basket of interventions."

The PDNA report in particular found that Malawi is not resilient, and that the same sectors continue to be negatively impacted by climate change and natural disasters. Malawi's social sector – health, education and housing – was particularly heavily impacted by flooding in 2015 and 2019, with infrastructure and productive sectors being similarly negatively impacted. USAID should come to the table in an effort to "build the stocks" in the social sector and support diagnostic studies of the social, infrastructure, and productive sectors to determine what is wrong with these sectors and why wide-spread impacts from climate-related disasters persist seemingly unchanged from one event to the next. Attempts to engage different sectors thus far in national-level policy development and implementation have somewhat put the cart before the horse, in that there is not a clear understanding of the climate change-related risks that sectors are even trying to mitigate against in the first place. Steps must be taken to link climate change and disaster resilience with economic resilience.

There is a strong donor presence in the Shire River Basin that has provided ample lessons learned on catchment and integrated water resource management (IWRM) that can be applied to future strategic options. A review of implementation by other donors in the Shire Basin by the PERFORM Final Evaluation team identified a number of attributes of current practices and institutional arrangements that may constrain the shift to catchment-scale approaches. Institutional arrangements do not currently leave much room for innovation or different ways of doing things, and donors often leave government stakeholders confused because they develop their own agendas and activities that they then impose, with lots of duplicate efforts and staggered implementation of similar or identical activities. Despite advances in REDD+ readiness in particular, interviews with individuals from relevant Government of Malawi departments found that many government stakeholders are still confused about REDD+ as a concept, as well as the differentiation between climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation. The Kulera Landscape REDD+ Program was cited by stakeholders as a good

⁶ Vargas, Ronald and Christian Omuto. 2016. *Soil Loss Assessment in Malawi*. FAO, UNDP-UNEP, and Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development – Malawi.

⁷ Government of Malawi. 2019. Malawi 2019 Floods Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA).

example of a program that mainstreamed procedural knowledge while helping to clarify core concepts for stakeholders, likely due in part to the stringent MRV and capacity requirements of the voluntary carbon market.

PERFORM supported the implementation of the Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) in Malawi in 2017 in order to generate the Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment for Malawi,⁸ intended to help operationalize the NFLRS. The Opportunities Assessment identified five mutually supportive restoration interventions determined to have the greatest potential to scale in contexts across Malawi to address existing degradation and land use challenges. These were:

1. Agricultural technologies
2. Community forests and woodlots
3. Natural forest and plantation management
4. Soil and water conservation
5. Riparian zone tree planting and natural regeneration

The evaluation team found strong evidence that PERFORM provided support and achieved measurable outcomes related to the implementation of new agricultural technologies and best practices, with some support for natural forest and plantation management primarily as a result of partnerships with the private sector. Community forests and woodlots were implemented to a small extent under PERFORM (particularly at schools and sites of existing woodlots), but woodlots were challenged by a lack of water for irrigation and the fact that many PERFORM activities took place within existing forest reserves. With some limited exceptions tied mostly to private sector engagement and conservation agriculture activities implemented in PERFORM project sites, PERFORM did not significantly support soil and water conservation activities, nor riparian zone planting/restoration or natural regeneration. However, these are key options for future climate change programming that support catchment-scale approaches, and it is likely that these interventions will be targeted for future funding under the Malawi Climate Change Management Fund.

Department of Forestry and district-level stakeholders in Mzimba noted PERFORM's success in elevating the management of pilot activities to the traditional authority level, and that it was a "very workable idea" to be replicated elsewhere in the Northern Malawi, where traditional leadership is strong; in Southern Malawi, there is no direct link between authority structures and the people implementing activities. Forestry stakeholders also felt that overall, PERFORM could have done more to focus on livelihoods by putting more emphasis on customary lands. However, future programming that works to put activity management in the hands of traditional authorities could be used as an entry point to address livelihood opportunities on customary lands – as much as 75% of land in Malawi is classified as customary.⁹ Lessons learned from PERFORM grantee Training Support for Partners (TSP) and its work engaging youth through clans and traditional management of graveyards (Section 3.8.2) could also inform the replication and scaling of low-emission livelihood opportunities on customary lands.

⁸ Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining – Malawi. 2017. *Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment for Malawi*. NFLRA (Malawi), IUCN, WRI.

⁹ Malawi Country Profile. <https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/malawi/#land>

EQ1: Conclusions

The PERFORM Final PE team found evidence of mixed progress toward key outcomes relevant to EQ1, and identified strategic options for future USAID/Malawi programming.

- Overall, the PERFORM Final PE team found more evidence of attempts to strengthen, revise, or align strategies and action plans. Apart from support for capacity building, PERFORM had limited time for implementation support for the institutions, systems, strategies and plans it established.
- PERFORM activities in the pilot sites were wide-reaching and encompassed a suite of activities that resulted in meaningful livelihood improvements for just over half (55.6%) of PERFORM participants surveyed. PERFORM participants were most likely to cite beekeeping, irrigated agriculture, pass-on approaches to livestock rearing, VSLAs, and the distribution of OFSP vines as the most meaningful PERFORM interventions. The evaluation team also observed evidence that PERFORM activities were adopted by community members outside the project sites or otherwise not targeted by the project. The pass-on approach for OFSP is one activity implemented by PERFORM that was adopted by non-participating community members.
- While the evaluation team found evidence that PERFORM acted on the MTE recommendation to increase production of marketable commodities, there was limited evidence of PERFORM support to improve market access for project participants outside of the partnership between members of the Lucheche Cooperative and KHP; however, the PERFORM team had limited time to implement this kind of ad hoc support. The evaluation team also found instances where women that participated in PERFORM activities either wanted to bring their products to market but could not due to a lack of marketability, or took matters into their own hands and created income-generating opportunities without direct PERFORM intervention.
- With regard to local and national linkages, the evaluation found that community co-management agreements supported by PERFORM play an important role in starting and maintaining best practices at the local level that contribute to implementation of national-level strategies. The project also enhanced communication between national and sub-national offices on forest management during the development of Forest Management Plans and Forest Co-Management Agreements, and more generally around the implementation of low emission and sustainable livelihood activities. PERFORM participants also indicated that the project helped strengthen linkages with district-level decision-makers and law enforcement. However, there are still some key gaps between national and local legal frameworks, complicating enforcement, and there is a clear need to reconcile national and local enforcement efforts. However, stakeholders involved in enforcement said that PERFORM helped provide a basis for more evidence-based enforcement.

3.3 Evaluation Question 2: Relevant PERFORM Approach

PERFORM's second area of focus was improving the capacity of national government and non-governmental stakeholders to play a central role in advancing REDD+ readiness and data-driven, evidence-based approaches to developing and/or amending forest, natural resource management, and resilience strategies, policies, and regulatory instruments. Activities related to EQ2 included capacity building for national-level stakeholders responsible for the National

REDD+ Strategy, the NFLRS, the national GHG inventory, and the NCS, and track directly to PERFORM Outcome 1: REDD+ Readiness Advanced.¹⁰

EQ2: What lessons and implications does PERFORM offer for REDD+ readiness scaling up and likely impacts on REDD+ outcomes?

To answer EQ2, the PERFORM evaluation team assessed the results and performance of PERFORM activities related to the following approaches:

- Support to the Government of Malawi to revise and amend the National Forest Act (and the Order Paper);
- Application of lessons learned and evidence-based approaches in the development and adoption of laws, policies, regulations, and standards for sustainable landscape management in Malawi;
- Support for analysis and storage of evidence/data on sustainable landscape management;
- Support for cross-sectoral fora/dialogues on instruments and policies to promote sustainable landscapes approaches.

3.4 Evaluation Question 2: Findings

The PERFORM MTE identified a general sense of confusion and frustration among stakeholders primarily interested in the revenue-generating aspects of REDD+, and it was recommended that over the second half of the project, PERFORM, the Department of Forestry, and other Government of Malawi counterparts should work with stakeholders to clarify the differences between the Malawi REDD+ Action Plan (MRPAP) and the national REDD+ strategy, and the implications of each for eventual REDD+ projects in the country. The MTE emphasized the need to ensure a similar level of technical capacity across all relevant GoM stakeholders and suggested that PERFORM consider expanding technical capacity building related to obtaining and analyzing forest data to ensure policymakers can understand and effectively use geospatial data products and better operationalize REDD+ policy across GoM.

The PERFORM final evaluation team found evidence that the project worked to address these recommendations in the second half of implementation by finalizing the National REDD+ Strategy, and supporting the National Forest Inventory (NFI) and activity data analysis for the forestry sector. Notably the GHG-IS at the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) and sectoral focal points was operational to feed baseline data into the National REDD+ and other strategies. PERFORM operationalized the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed in the first half of the project alongside specialized trainings on using the GHG calculator, mapping and monitoring LULUCF, land cover classifications, etc. PERFORM also identified a range of possible stakeholders that would use GHG-IS within the Government of Malawi, among donors, and within the private sector, and developed “use case” scenarios for each.. The GHG-

¹⁰ Sub-outcomes for PERFORM Outcome 1: Capacities for REDD+ data collection, analysis, and use increased; Core priorities of the Malawi REDD+ strategy operationalized; REDD+ relevant policy and legal frameworks improved

IS Use Case Scenarios report was still being finalized at PERFORM's conclusion, but this report and the communications materials already developed by PERFORM around the GHG-IS should be used to continue outreach to additional stakeholders and find other ways that this tool can be leveraged.

Government stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team indicated that the GHG-IS and related tools like the IPCC-inspired GHG calculator (based on country-specific emission factors (Tier II) developed by PERFORM) are some of the strongest quantitative contributions PERFORM made to GHG inventory and advancing REDD+ readiness in Malawi. The GHG inventory is expected to contribute directly to MRV for the newly conceptualized Malawi climate change management fund, managed by the Malawi Environmental Protection Authority (MEPA). While not yet operational, the board overseeing the fund's management was just appointed on 12 August 2019. The EAD, the Department of Energy Affairs (DEA), and other GoM stakeholders are exploring various strategies to contribute to the fund, including a carbon tax on vehicles and a climate change levee. The GHG-IS will be used to model the potential impacts of these strategies.

In the second half of the project, PERFORM also continued to support members of the REDD+ Secretariat and the REDD+ Expert Group (RExG) to contribute to the development of the National Resilience Strategy in order to strengthen its emphasis on sustainable landscape management. The Malawi REDD+ Strategy was finalized and is expected to be presented to the National Steering Committee on Climate Change before sectoral policymakers.

The evaluation team noted that PERFORM did not fully engage two key agencies – the Malawi Department of Surveys and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs – in its training and capacity building efforts resulting in limited data shared to these key sectors. While none of the PERFORM activities required remote sensing for validation, the project could have worked alongside the Department of Surveys to generate a better evidence base that demonstrates the project's impacts on reducing degradation, including sharing final activity data at PERFORM's conclusion, which would have allowed the Department to identify areas near or within PERFORM project sites that could be prioritized for restoration to either build on PERFORM achievements or prevent backsliding. According to a stakeholder at the Department of Surveys, "it is very difficult to plan without knowing what is where."

While it is hopeful that major empirical reports like the Soil Loss Assessment and the Restoration Opportunities Assessment will underscore the need for data-driven approaches and data sharing between departments and other stakeholders in order for Malawi to address and monitor degradation and restoration challenges, some stakeholders interviewed by the FPE team stated that PERFORM and other programs/donors have thus far failed to make the case for why the Department of Surveys and geospatial approaches are important to other government counterparts, or how these data-driven approaches fit into the big picture of sustainable landscape approaches, scaling up REDD+ readiness, and overall green growth/economic resilience.

EQ2: Conclusions

- The PERFORM MTE recommended that the DoF and other GoM counterparts work with stakeholders to clarify differences between the MRPAP and the national REDD+

strategy, since there was indication that stakeholders were confused around linking the Plan and Strategy to green growth and the implications of each for economic development in Malawi. The PERFORM final evaluation team found evidence that the project tried to address these recommendations in the second half of implementation, primarily through capacity building around the GHG-IS, which in turn helped establish a stronger basis for MRV to support Malawi's burgeoning national climate change fund.

- PERFORM training and capacity building largely missed two key agencies related to NFI data sharing and overall resilience planning – the Malawi Department of Surveys, and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs. PERFORM training and capacity building largely missed two key agencies related to REDD+ readiness and overall resilience planning – the Malawi Department of Surveys, and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs. While the Department of Surveys participated in some PERFORM REDD+-related activities, both departments would have benefitted from formal closeout procedures from PERFORM where they could have received the final activity data generated by the project.

3.5 Evaluation Question 3: Relevant PERFORM Approach

PERFORM's focus on finance for climate change and sustainable landscapes extended to both collaboration and coordination options and pathways for Malawi to access financial support for REDD and low emission development activities, and the development of public-private partnerships and innovative, community-driven private sector solutions that are profitable, sustainable, and scalable. Activities related to EQ3 are closely linked to cross-cutting PERFORM

EQ3: Has PERFORM's engagement with the private sector to reduce drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and increase local incomes been effective to leverage private sector equity to support viable private sector solutions? Have the activities been profitable and sustainable, can they be scaled up, and if so, how?

Outcome 4: Pathways for Sustainability Instituted.¹¹

¹¹ Sub-outcomes for PERFORM Outcome 4: Capacities of targeted partner organizations developed; PPPs facilitated; sources of additional financial and/or technical support leveraged

To evaluate EQ3, the PERFORM evaluation assessed the results of activities related to the following:

- Supporting commercial partnerships (PPP) to promote sustainable landscape approaches;
- Facilitating mobilization of investments in sustainable landscapes in Malawi;
- Promotion of coordination and collaboration across donors, private sector, other stakeholder groups on sustainable landscapes

3.6 Evaluation Question 3: Findings

PERFORM continued to focus on supporting in-country partners to leverage sources of public and private finance in support of PERFORM's objectives, activities, and outputs. In addition to forest landscape restoration private sector investment opportunities assessment linked to the Restoration Opportunities Assessment for Malawi, PERFORM organized and facilitated a FLR (Forest Landscape Restoration) Private Sector Investment side event at the 2018 Malawi Investment Forum, which leveraged co-financing from the US Department of State and Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperative and Development (BMZ). The additional \$198,000 in finance catalyzed by PERFORM supported the development of a framework for monitoring progress toward implementation of Malawi's National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (NFLRS), which in turn complements the five-year, 5 billion MWK Malawi Youth Forest Restoration Program to implement key restoration priorities across Malawi's 28 districts.

In a 2016 REDD+ finance options assessment conducted by PERFORM, various sources of international climate change/mitigation financing were evaluated in order to determine the most viable sources for Malawi to pursue. PERFORM suggested that the best options to pursue are the Green Climate Fund (UNFCCC), the Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL), and the Governor's Climate and Forests Task Force. In addition to establishing a policy foundation for targeted investment with the finalization of the National REDD+ Strategy and NFLRS, the GHG-IS was PERFORM's biggest contribution in the second half of the project to meeting the monitoring and reporting requirements of these funding sources.

PERFORM also issued a call for applications focused on promoting commercial approaches to address deforestation and forest degradation in line with the objectives and policy precedent established in the NCS and NFLRS. Select private sector firms were awarded fixed-amount grants aimed at reducing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, with income and/or livelihood co-benefits for communities and the firms themselves. The business models selected for PERFORM support and highlighted in the mini case studies below – Consolidated Processing Industries (CPI) and Kawandama Hills Plantation (KHP) - demonstrate alignment with key national policies and strategies supported by the PERFORM activity; promote sustainable production of timber and non-timber forest products; and confer livelihood benefits for local communities. However, there are a number of challenges and opportunities potentially influencing the profitability, sustainability, and scalability of these and other forest-based private enterprises in Malawi. For more on these challenges and opportunities, see Section 3.6.1 and Section 3.6.2. for case studies on commercial approaches supported by PERFORM.

3.6.1 Mini Case Study: Consolidated Processing Industries

Founded in 2016, Consolidated Processing Industries (CPI) relies on trees for its various products, including veneers, furniture, and other wood products, and bills itself as both a forestry and timber processing company. CPI received a grant from PERFORM for \$100,000 USD to replant 500 hectares (ha) of land in the Chikangawa area of Mzimba District in Northern Malawi, not far from its processing facility. Among the organization's core missions is sustainable value addition going all the way up the forestry value chain.



Figure 4 Seedlings dot the landscape across part the 500 ha being reforested by CPI with PERFORM support.

The objective of the PERFORM award to CPI was to utilize CPI's experience and organizational strength to scale up reforestation of degraded land by planting 500 ha of pine and eucalyptus trees in order to provide a sustainable source of supply for CPI's core products. While the evaluation team found evidence that this objective was achieved, and that implementation of reforestation-related activities extended beyond what was perhaps originally envisioned for the scope of the grant, the team also identified some challenges and opportunities for the profitability, sustainability, and scalability of its business model.

In a report for the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFRI00) prepared by WRI with support from the US State Department and BMZ,¹² CPI's activities as supported by the PERFORM grant were analyzed alongside other investable opportunities in tree planting in Malawi, Ethiopia, and Niger. Investment opportunities were evaluated on their basis to deliver a financial return while restoring degraded forest and agricultural land using five criteria: profitability (commercial viability), scalability, social benefit, environmental benefit, and replicability.

On the basis of commercial viability, CPI's holistic in-house approach to value-added timber products is cited as its basis for future profitability. In addition to maintaining its own processing facility and woodshop, CPI also maintains on-site nurseries – supported by PERFORM – with the capacity to supply as many as 1,000,000 seedlings to be planted on deforested or degraded land. CPI has also started to engage the ample human capital in the communities around its operations to support reforestation efforts. However, the PERFORM evaluation team found that CPI's main barrier to both profitability and scalability is the ongoing availability of sustainably produced timber, which is directly tied to the amount of land available and dedicated to putting more trees on the landscape in support of CPI's business model.

The WRI report found that the CPI model is scalable overall, citing growth in the construction sector as a driver of demand for value-added timber products. However, CPI's ability to reforest 500 ha with PERFORM funds was contingent on Department of Forestry authorization to use the targeted area on a concession basis, making land a potential limiting factor to private sector solutions. While PERFORM was able to exercise direct influence in the concession-granting process for CPI by engaging with the Department of Forestry on CPI's behalf, it is not clear that the system is well equipped to navigate these types of public-private partnerships in a standardized way and with the proper amount of due diligence required to minimize harm and ensure participatory processes. An estimated 93% of land-based concessions granted by governments to companies in emerging markets are already inhabited,¹³ making participatory approaches to planning and management essential for sustainable investments and mitigation of risk. The extent to which the process for obtaining a concession is navigable for companies with significantly fewer resources or a lack of foreign investment is also unclear; what scale and type of forest or land use-based enterprise is most attractive for both investors and government? The ability to scale these types of private sector investments must consider more than simply demand for the products produced.

Even in terms of demand, it is not clear that CPI has a strong grasp on its potential international market for its products, or how competitive those products are with products bearing a Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), South African Bureau of Standards, or other certification.

The social/community benefits of CPI's activities as supported by PERFORM are most readily reflected by direct employment in activities related to tree planting, and the inclusion of women at different levels of responsibility across restoration activities. Women made up 40% of the people directly involved in tree planting, while the nursery supported with PERFORM funds was

¹² Gagne, C. and S. Faruqi. *The Business of Planting Trees: Africa – Investment Opportunities in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Niger*. World Resources Institute.

¹³ <http://rightsandresources.org/em/work-impact/strategic-initiatives/private-sector-risk-analysis/#,WqGck0xFw2x>

staffed with and even split of men and women. CPI told the PERFORM FPE team that it estimates that as much as 48,000,000 MWK (\$65,000 USD) of the \$100,000 USD grant received through PERFORM went directly to community members, and that as many as 1,200 people were employed as a result of PERFORM support (the VRI report indicates that 70% of CPI staff are from local communities). However, the number of people CPI can employ at any one time is still limited and fluctuates based on time of year.

One way that CPI has used PERFORM support is by providing short-term livelihood benefits to local community members in exchange for their contributions to land management and restoration is spot cultivation, particularly in parts of the existing concession where there is excessive grass. Community members help clear the grass, thereby reducing fire risk (community members are also involved in controlled burns to create buffer zones). In addition to just planting trees, they also plant a staple crop like potatoes, which can be eaten or sold. This way, community members are not sacrificing food security or other potential sources of income while helping manage newly reforested areas and mitigating risk for the long-term benefit of CPI.

In terms of environmental benefits, there is no evidence yet to support the conclusion that CPI's reforestation and other activities supported with the PERFORM grant have reduced deforestation and degradation of the landscape outside of the 500 ha under concession since the trees were only recently planted. However, CPI's agreement with PERFORM does stipulate that CPI will begin charcoal production using eucalyptus "lops and tops" around years five or six of implementation when the trees are more mature. The evaluation team found that in addition to a lack of available land for sustainable forestry activities, adequate water for irrigation also represents a significant limiting factor for the implementation and scalability of forest-based enterprises like CPI, particularly in catchments that are severely degraded and vulnerable to erosion and soil loss. CPI expanded on its original plan to replant with pine and eucalyptus, choosing to plant mahogany in some upstream areas and riparian zones. CPI also consulted with a PERFORM staff member on selecting appropriate indigenous species, and plans to begin cultivating more riparian and indigenous species in the nursery to support healthy catchments.

The grant to CPI serves as a useful proof of concept when considering similar future grant programs or other investments in reforestation and sustainable supply chains in Malawi, and CPI leadership emphasized that the "multiplier effect" resulting from the grant provided by PERFORM cannot be understated, as the company now has the evidence base to pursue additional investment. As a result of PERFORM support, CPI plans to pursue an additional 4,000 ha concession from the Department of Forestry, and will use the PERFORM-supported 500 ha as a proof of concept to seek additional finance from the GCF and other international sources to finance reforestation of those hectares.

Through the PERFORM grant, CPI told the PERFORM FPE team that it developed a better understanding of the process of bringing land under management for reforestation and the production of sustainable timber, including a better understanding of the real costs to reforest 500 ha of degraded land. The initial \$100,000 USD from PERFORM catalyzed an additional direct investment in landscape restoration by CPI of approximately \$35,000 USD, but ultimately, CPI reports that the full cost of reforesting 500 ha was closer to \$200,000 when accounting for other indirect costs.

3.6.2 Mini Case Study: Kawandama Hills

Founded in 2009, Kawandama Hills Plantation (KHP) is primarily involved in the production of essential oils, particularly citronella. The PERFORM grant to KHP was intended to provide support to outgrowers while supporting KHP itself to plant more trees for the production of essential oils. The evaluation team found evidence that both of these objectives were achieved, though it is less clear if KHP understands how its activities link to national-level policies and strategies (NCS, NFLRS) aimed at reducing deforestation and degradation in Malawi, or how it might leverage these linkages to its activities to access additional climate change or restoration finance for its business model. The team also identified some challenges and opportunities for the profitability, sustainability, and scalability of KHP's business model as supported by PERFORM.

In terms of the profitability of KHP's activities as supported by PERFORM, the PERFORM grant resulted in nearly 100 ha of additional land planted – 60 ha planted by KHP, and 33 ha planted by outgrowers. PERFORM support also resulted in tangible production increases; prior to receiving the grant, KHP was producing six tons of charcoal from woody biomass every year. With PERFORM support, KHP increased production of charcoal to 18 tons per year. KHP charcoal produced with PERFORM support can now be found in all of Malawi's Shop-Rite stores, with 5 kg selling for as much as 2,500 MWK (\$3.42 USD). KHP is Malawi's only producer of legal, sustainable charcoal.

The evaluation team noted a gap in the KHP citronella value chain in the waste biomass left over after the leaves have been steam distilled, for which KHP has no management plan or secondary use. The residual oils in the biomass make the leaves a poor choice for composting, and the sheer volume of biomass represents significant labor and resources, but KHP has not identified a sustainable strategy for managing this by-product.

In terms of scaling the activities implemented with the PERFORM grant, there is a significant international market for KHP's products, and for essential oils more broadly. KHP identified a demand of at least 130 tons across the UK, South Africa, and the United States, with additional unmet demand in Spain. Currently, the company produces just 30 tons a year. Like CPI, KHP is also challenged by access to land to scale production, particularly since cooperative members are generally constrained in the amount of land any one person is able to dedicate to activities.

"Things on farms are well protected." Like CPI, KHP has learned the importance of good coordination and communication, particularly with the communities that private sector entities are operating in and around. Creating livelihood opportunities for community members, like those supported by PERFORM, fosters trust between communities and businesses, and helps mitigate risk stemming from both accidental and deliberate human activities, and the natural environment. For more information of scaling PERFORM activities, as well as the social and community benefits resulting from this PERFORM grant, see the following section on the Lucheche Cooperative.

The evaluation team did not find any evidence that the core activities supporting KHP's business model are not replicable, but the core constraints to profitability, sustainability, and scalability must be overcome.

Lucheche Cooperative

Unlike CPI, which relied on an informal network of community members to support its reforestation of 500 ha, Kawandama Hills engaged its affiliated cooperative of outgrowers for PERFORM-supported activities. The Lucheche Cooperative, which started with just six farmers in 2012, is comprised of 43 women and 78 men for a total of 121 members. The Cooperative is a key component of KHP's commitment to sustainable products, as well as critical to the company's overall profitability. According to KHP staff, the main message that the company wants to communicate to growers is that "Kawandama wants farmers to benefit the company while also benefitting Perekezi."



Figure 5 Lucheche Cooperative Board and Members.

At the start of the period of PERFORM support, outgrowers were given three options for plants to cultivate for use in essential oils: rose geranium, lemongrass, and citronella (though PERFORM only supported citronella cultivation). Despite being able to sell citronella biomass back to KHP for less per tonne (\$48 USD/tonne, of which Kawandama takes up to 12.5%) than other plants with valuable secondary metabolites like lemongrass or rose geranium (the latter KHP buys for \$68 USD/ton of biomass), citronella has become the go-to product for Lucheche Cooperative members and community members hoping to join the cooperative. In the first year, most growers automatically opted for citronella, and by the third year, most growers of lemongrass and rose geranium had dropped them in favor of citronella.

Cooperative members like cultivating citronella because it requires relatively little effort once planted, and can continue to be harvested for a long time. Farmers supported by PERFORM to

grow citronella for KHP earn approximately 280,000 MWK (\$383 USD) per hectare,¹⁴ which is greater than what can be earned from other crops planted over the same area. Cooperative members interviewed by the evaluation team attributed PERFORM support to the ability of cooperative members to buy cattle and TVs, improve their homes, purchase fertilizer, and pay school fees for their children. Women in the cooperative expressed feeling increasingly empowered as a result of support for their business relationship with KHP, purchasing their own cattle and making household maintenance and purchase decisions.



Though KHP originally only intended for growers to plant citronella on marginal lands (for which it is well suited), growers have, somewhat perversely, started to plant citronella trees on arable land because of the greater income potential. While the evaluation team did not find any evidence of negative outcomes resulting from planting on usable agricultural land, there may be ecological impacts if this is done more extensively. Cooperative members have found that some plots already under citronella cultivation have termite infestation at the roots of the trees, and individual attempts to double the amount of land under citronella cultivation have generally failed as a result; it is unclear if the spread of a monoculture is a contributing factor, if there is an underlying issue making the trees more vulnerable to termites, or if there are agroforestry or other approaches that could mitigate against termites as pests. The use of traditional pesticides on individual plots must

receive community approval, and there was no evidence of anyone using pesticides to combat this problem. However, no other management strategy has been identified, and it does not appear that outgrowers have been supported to find and implement one.

The Cooperative operates in very close proximity to the Perekezi Forest Reserve, so members are finding it difficult to access additional arable land to scale activities. As a result, small family plots¹⁵ are being further fragmented across multiple generations of family members. To try and

¹⁴ This figure assumes a density of 3,000 seedlings/hectare, which is the carrying capacity promoted by KHP/the Lucheche Cooperative.

¹⁵ Among Lucheche Cooperative members, the largest single landholding is approximately 1.2 hectares.

solve this problem, the Cooperative applied for concession of 700 ha within the forest reserve, but it has not yet been granted or denied. The chairman of the Cooperative's board said the group felt hopeful after engaging with the government about the concession, since the existence of the cooperative and the proven record of success of activities supported by PERFORM lend credibility to the concession request.

Cooperative members interviewed by the PERFORM Final PE team and visited in activity sites have also noticed a change in the availability of water, both for household use and land-based activities. A stream that is a key source of the water for the community has become degraded and is increasingly less perennial. With this in mind, the Cooperative highlighted the group's willingness to manage protect the stream at its source in its concession request, including their interest and willingness in planting other species of trees in the interest of conserving their water supply and the overall catchment.

When the PERFORM Final PE team visited the Lucheche Cooperative in Mzimba, we saw cooperative members harvesting the fruits of the last three years of PERFORM support. According to the board of the Cooperative, 16 new individuals have prepared nurseries on their land and are prepared to join; however, KHP indicates that they have had an additional 230 new farmers sign up just this year. KHP may have to be strategic about how it allocates resources to new cooperative members, and may not be able to provide inputs for all the hectares that farmers want to plant. One solution to this problem could be pass-on approaches to seed saving, storage, and the establishment of nurseries to engage more outgrowers without having to supply inputs directly. However, this would likely require a longitudinal investment in generating high-quality local seed that commands an equally high price and does not limit export potential.

EQ3: Conclusions

- A 2016 PERFORM REDD+ finance options assessment identified and evaluated a number of sources of international finance in order to determine the most viable potential sources for Malawi. In addition to establishing a policy foundation for targeted investment with the finalization of the National REDD+ Strategy and NFLRS, the GHG-IS was PERFORM's biggest contribution in the second half of the project to meeting the monitoring and reporting requirements of these funding sources.
- Through a call for applications, PERFORM directly supported commercial approaches to address deforestation and degradation in line with the objectives of the NCS and NFLRS. Private sector grantees received funds with the expectation that their PERFORM-supported activities would reduce drivers of deforestation and forest degradation while generating income and/or livelihood co-benefits for communities while contributing to the overall profitability and sustainability of the private sector entities.
 - Consolidated Processing Industries focused on value-added timber production, reforesting 500 ha of degraded land with PERFORM support. The grant to CPI serves as a useful proof of concept when considering similar future grant programs or other investments in reforestation and sustainable supply chains in Malawi. The evaluation team found that this investment in CPI resulted in the potential for a significant multiplier effect, providing an evidence base to pursue additional investment. As a result of PERFORM support, CPI plans to pursue an

additional 4,000 ha concession from the Department of Forestry, and will use the PERFORM-supported 500 ha as a proof of concept to seek additional finance from the GCF and other international sources to finance reforestation of those hectares. Through the PERFORM grant, CPI developed a better understanding of the process of bringing land under management for reforestation and the production of sustainable timber. However, the PERFORM evaluation team found that CPI's main barrier to both profitability and scalability is the ongoing availability of sustainably produced timber, which is directly tied to the amount of land available and dedicated to putting more trees on the landscape in support of CPI's business model.

- o Kawandama Hills Plantation is Malawi's only producer of charcoal that is both legal and sustainable. The PERFORM grant to KHP provided support to outgrowers while supporting KHP itself to plant more trees for the production of essential oils. The evaluation team found evidence that both of these objectives were achieved, though KHP demonstrated a limited understanding of how its activities link to national-level policies and strategies (NCS, NFLRS) aimed at reducing deforestation and degradation in Malawi, or how it might leverage these linkages to its activities to access additional climate change or restoration finance. Like CPI, KHP is also challenged by access to land to scale production, particularly since cooperative members are generally constrained in the amount of land any one person is able to dedicate to activities.

3.7 Evaluation Question 4: Relevant PERFORM Approach

PERFORM made the USAID priority to mainstream gender inclusion and equality integral to the project's approach, integrating gender dimensions by recognizing that access, control, perception, and use of forest and land resources have significant disparities among men, women, and youth. Activities implemented by PERFORM related to youth and gender are linked to PERFORM Outcome 2: Low-emissions land use opportunities in target geographies increased. Based on PERFORM documents, activities were implemented with consideration for the differences between matrilineal structures in northern Malawi and patrilineal structures in Central and Southern Malawi.

EQ4: How effective has PERFORM been in promoting women and youth empowerment and gender equality in its activities?

It should be noted that the PERFORM scope of work did not explicitly mandate any youth-specific activities, but the PERFORM Final PE team did seek out evidence of youth engagement and empowerment through economic resources, and collected age data of project participants engaged for field data collection.

To answer EQ4, the evaluation team assessed results and performance of activities supporting the prior three EQs, with a special focus on pilot site activities inside and outside forest reserves where women are likely to be more active, and in greater numbers.

Evaluation Question 4: Findings

The evaluation team found substantial evidence of the effort the PERFORM team made to mainstream gender inclusion and equality in project activities, and worked to include this perspective in its analyses. In a survey of project participants across the project sites, 58% of respondents were female. Overall, women were slightly more represented under PERFORM activities than they are as a percentage of the total population of Malawi, indicating that more women than men likely participated in the project overall.

Women's participation in project activities was most limited in activities where there was either an element of potential danger – such as nighttime patrols of forest reserves – or of extended, high-exertion physical labor. Women interviewed by the evaluation team across project sites reported finding activities like meetings and trainings collaborative and inclusive, and the team found that women were also able to participate in local governing and enforcement bodies, like forest task forces.

The evaluation team found that PERFORM generated a number of benefits broadly related to improving daily quality of life that disproportionately impacted women. The most frequently reported benefits of PERFORM activities from women participating in FGDs and surveys include:

- Women were provided with options for activities and new technologies, and were able to choose which activities/technologies they personally wanted to pursue;
- Improved cookstoves significantly lessen the daily burden of fuelwood collection in PERFORM project sites and have positive respiratory/health impacts by virtue of producing less smoke;
- Co-management agreements that allow women to collect deadwood from forest reserves had freed up their time to pursue other domestic and livelihood activities.

Among PERFORM participants that the evaluation team engaged in PERFORM project sites, the mean age was 35.8 years old. Participants were split evenly between the “youth” cohort (10-35 years old) and “adult” cohort (35+ years old). 83% of respondents to the evaluation mini survey in Ntchisi were youth. The data indicate that even without intentionally targeting youth through project activities, PERFORM successfully engaged a large number of youth

Overall, the evaluation team did not find any evidence of adverse impacts from PERFORM project activities on women or youth participants, or adverse impacts on women and youth in the community more broadly.

More information on youth engagement in PERFORM activities can be found in Section 3.8.2.

3.8.1 Access to Productive Economic Resources

A notable finding related to women's participation in PERFORM activities was the degree of innovation observed in activities where women were empowered to make decisions about how they use their productive time, and how they would like to manage their money. In the case of women in Chinjoka Chirwa, they were victims of their own success: women in the community had such great results cultivating Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) that they wanted to sell their surplus in Mzimba, but they found that the market lacks awareness of this particular variety of potato and that buyers are skeptical, favoring instead the Kenya variety.

While there was limited evidence of PERFORM support for market research for non-timber forest products and support for market access, the evaluation team found no evidence of direct PERFORM support for women specifically to market and sell agricultural products produced as a result of PERFORM support, despite women being more likely to be engaged in many livelihood activities. However, one group of women that participated in PERFORM activities in Mjojo Mhlanga organized and established a small roadside market, visited by the evaluation team, that sells tomatoes, several varieties of potato, and a few other produce items to generate income for the women that produced them.



Figure 7 Tomatoes for sale at a women-run roadside stand indirectly catalyzed by PERFORM.

Access to village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) for women under PERFORM served as an important way to target the development of women's financial and social capital while promoting women in leadership roles within their associations and the communities more broadly. In the second half of PERFORM, the project targeted women that sell products from their nearby forest reserve for their livelihood needs. While the PERFORM Final PE team did not note any direct evidence of improved livelihood outcomes or other benefits from VSLAs focused on forest products there was an element of capacity-building toward running self-sustaining associations after PERFORM's end that the evaluation team observed indirectly.¹⁶ However, while Field Coordinators (PERFORM staff) were responsible for encouraging women to continue and grow their VSLAs, it is unclear how and to what extent the structure of the various VSLAs supported by PERFORM will enable them to continue their activities and scale up investment/return, or if there are grievance redress and other mechanisms available to women to navigate challenges within the VSLAs.

¹⁶ Most VSLAs implemented under PERFORM did enter into a second share cycle after the initial loan cycle.

In the penultimate quarter of PERFORM, the project reported that 1,044 VSAL members supported by the project saved a total of 21,683,000 MWK (\$29,000 USD), or an average of 20,726 MWK per person (\$28.20 USD).

3.8.2 Mini Case Study: Clan-Based Approaches to Youth Engagement in Land Management in Ntchisi

While PERFORM did not directly implement any activities specifically focused on youth, the evaluation team did assess the performance of a two-year grant (2017-2018) to Training Support for Partners (TSP) – similar to those issued to KHP and CPI – to engage youth (ages 10-35) in two separate cohorts around land/resource tenure and farming/agriculture. TSP structured activities to target school-aged (roughly ages 7-15) and out-of-school youth through clan-based approaches, using traditional community structures as the lens through which to frame education and engagement in land management. PERFORM funding was used to scale best practices identified through prior funding from Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), and the International Land Coalition (ILC).

School-aged youth were engaged directly through their respective clans,¹⁷ in a two-pronged approach designed to sensitize them to land use activities in their own communities before engaging them in a more formal setting at school. School-going youth were engaged through their clans on understanding the importance of natural resource management, including traditional approaches to land and resource management. Students were also engaged alongside their parents to learn how to identify tree species and their different uses.

Clans were also the entry point for youth that are no longer in school, but with a greater reliance on parental traditional knowledge and the direct transmission of this knowledge between generations of clan members. These older youth were given a choice of activities based in forest-based enterprises that more readily reflect their need to earn a livelihood. Activities included beekeeping, guinea fowl, and producing fruit tree seedlings and vetiver grass for sale. Older youth were also engaged in exchanges with youth in other villages to share knowledge, opportunities, and challenges.

TSP worked alongside school-aged youth to establish four school clubs, one in each traditional authority where other TSP activities were implemented. Three clubs have 50/50 participation among boys and girls, while the fourth club's members are 60% female. These clubs focus on raising and planting trees and other activities like on-site woodlots at schools and raising seedlings for sale; in Ntchisi, club activities are focused on how to manage regeneration. Ntchisi is a unique case where TSP used traditional dance as an entry point for youth engagement, since hiding in the trees and interacting with the forest are part of these traditional practices.

Traditional approaches also represent a unique opportunity to address the policy gap, or the overall failure of national-level policies to reach down and through the lowest levels of organization within communities. In the case of clan-based approaches, TSP used traditional graveyard management to frame the importance of sustainable natural resource management

¹⁷ In the sites where TSP implemented its activities in Ntchisi, each village has between 4-10 clans comprised of several households each

(NRM), since each clan manages resources in its own area of the graveyard, and “[Government of Malawi] policies end at the graveyard.” By demonstrating cultural ties to NRM and focusing on skills and practices already used by clans locally, these management approaches can easily be scaled to areas outside of graveyards. The approach employed by TSP also streamlines well into the NFLRS.

PERFORM’s support for youth through the TSP represents the most explicit project focus on youth and instilling knowledge and skills in the next generation of land managers. While this grant opportunity reflects a good value-for-money approach, engaging youth is predicated on ongoing, long-term outcomes, and the two year period of performance of the PERFORM grant was likely too short to instill a sense of the long-benefits of trees and regeneration (though only time will tell). The most staggering direct outcome of PERFORM support for clan-based approaches to youth engagement was capacity building in participatory forest management, which resulted in more than 100 community management plans (under the proposal for PERFORM support, just 24 community management plans were anticipated). Demand was entirely driven by communities, placing added emphasis on the need for longer project cycles to both fully realize investment and catalyze long-term attitude changes and community benefits.

TSP support also resulted in demonstrable (though not easily quantifiable) changes in incomes, but more importantly, there is a marked shift in the attitudes and outlooks of participants related to NRM. Income was really a secondary emphasis of TSP support; the attitudes and behavior changes instilled across multiple generations are what will produce true long-term benefits. The method of blending traditional approaches and conventional best practices to engage youth reinforces other findings by the evaluation team that engaging traditional community structures directly results in better project outcomes, particularly in the north where traditional norms are better integrated throughout different levels of the community.

The four areas in which TSP implemented its grant have matriarchal social structures, so there was some emphasis on women’s inclusion specifically (though the PERFORM Final PE team did not find any evidence that the clan-based approach would not be replicable in patriarchal areas). With PERFORM support, clan-based approaches amplified the voices of women by appointing some women as ambassadors or community-based facilitators for each clan. By “handing over the stick” to women, there is greater confidence that activities will continue, especially since these women played a key role in helping disseminate interventions. The biggest hurdles to success for these unofficial ambassadors are a lack of formal training on the interventions, best practices, and the intersection of NRM with traditional practices, and barriers to their ability to be mobile throughout their communities to better transfer knowledge and communicate key messages.

EQ4: Conclusions

- While the PERFORM Final PE team was instructed to evaluate outcomes and impacts on both women and youth (ages 10-35), the PERFORM program design lacked an explicit emphasis on youth. The average age of participants targeted by the evaluation was 35.8 years old, making it difficult to discern impacts on youth as a cohort, and for practical purposes, the evaluation team could not generate meaningful data on youth 18 and younger. However, the team did find evidence of youth engagement through clan-based

approaches to natural resource management, framing some best practices through the lens of traditional graveyard management. As a result of PERFORM support, community demand for participatory forest management approaches resulted in more than 100 community forest management plans being developed.

- The evaluation team found significant evidence that PERFORM worked to engage women across the suite of project activities. Women that participated in evaluation activities indicated that they benefitted from: being able to choose which new activities and technologies they wanted to implement; time savings and health benefits from the introduction of ICS; and co-management agreements that allow women to collect deadwood from forest reserves, freeing up their time to pursue other things.
- The evaluation team found no evidence of direct PERFORM support for women to improve marketing and sales of agricultural products produced as a result of PERFORM activities, despite women being more likely to be engaged in many livelihood activities. Some women organized and created a market for the products they collectively produced with PERFORM support, while others attempted to bring their surplus to market but were unable to sell it due to a lack of market awareness of their products.
- VSLAs were established across PERFORM sites with project support, though the evaluation team did not note any direct evidence of improved livelihood outcomes or other benefits from VSLAs focused on forest products. However, at the project's conclusion, 1,044 female VSLA members supported by PERFORM had saved a total of \$21,683,000 MWK (\$29,000 USD).
- Overall, the evaluation team did not find evidence of any adverse impacts on women or youth resulting from PERFORM activities.

4.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations reflect an evidence-based analysis of PERFORM activities and consider the key findings and conclusions related to each evaluation question. More detailed information on strategic options for future climate change programming in Malawi can also be found in Section 3.2.4.

- **Support implementation and scaling of context-appropriate interventions, with an eye toward integrated approaches that can combine a suite of best practices to address evidence-based challenges and opportunities at scale.** Over the PERFORM period of performance, a number of key analyses emerged that should guide future sustainable landscapes approaches in Malawi – most relevant to PERFORM and potential follow-on approaches are the Restoration Opportunities Assessment for Malawi, the Malawi Soil Loss Assessment, and 2019 Post-Disaster Needs Assessment. These reports highlight the need for holistic, empirically-based landscape/catchment scale approaches that consider climate change resilience and disaster risk management in addition to sustainable livelihoods and other programming objectives, and provide quantitative evidence that supports site selection and tailoring of interventions for Malawi's various geographies. The PERFORM final evaluation team noted a significant shift from project-based thinking toward systems approaches among Government of Malawi stakeholders and other donor/development organizations. Catchment-based approaches also provide new opportunities for multi-stakeholder involvement and engagement of the private sector to support evidence-based,

community-led approaches. The PERFORM Evaluation Team recommends focusing in priority watersheds identified through the aforementioned empirical analyses due to oversaturation of donor efforts in the Shire River Basin and Southern Malawi more generally. The Linthipe watershed may be a good option for future support due to its central role in providing water security for Lilongwe. The Karonga basin or Bua catchment may also be suitable foci of future USAID programming.

- **Promote seed-saving and storage practices and technology and the establishment of nurseries.** The evaluation team found that community members in multiple PERFORM project sites struggled with a lack of capacity to collect and save seeds, store them, and establish seedlings or sprouts of tree or vegetable species to be transplanted elsewhere. In the most extreme case from the pilot sites, some community members indicated that they had been planting potato sprouts in particular over leach fields,¹⁸ hoping to use the residual moisture to keep the plants alive. Since root crops are particularly vulnerable to contamination by pathogens when planted over a leach field, community members must be taught appropriate, safe methods of maintaining and scaling agricultural products. Similarly, members of the Lucheche Cooperative working with KHP indicated that they would like to be able to save seeds and propagate seedlings without being reliant on KHP for their inputs, but lack the knowledge to do so. In this case, seed-saving and community-based nurseries could reduce the cost of providing inputs to a growing number of interested community members while still increasing the supply sustainably.
- **Put more programmatic emphasis on directly addressing the degradation resulting from fuelwood collection and charcoal production.** One of the biggest criticisms of the PERFORM approach among institutional stakeholders interviewed for the final evaluation was that PERFORM did not do enough to directly address the degradation of Malawi's forests resulting from common, widespread drivers. While more focus on patrolling and enforcement can continue to reduce degradation, future programming should explore community-led options that address degradation in forest reserves and work to get more trees on the landscape. PES and other results-based payments not tied to voluntary carbon markets – such as the riparian zone management/watershed protection activities proposed by the Lucheche Cooperative in its concession request – could be one type of intervention that can confer livelihood benefits to communities while working to reverse degradation. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security is also interested in piloting PES, using farmers to disseminate knowledge and skills without providing any inputs directly. An options assessment on fuel switching could also support reduced degradation, since the conversion rates of biomass to charcoal are fairly undesirable even under the best circumstances (10 tonnes of woody biomass to produce 1 tonne of charcoal). The energy department has identified the most suitable alternatives to counter biomass/charcoal use, including liquid petroleum gas (LPG), biogas, and briquettes, and is also researching tax waivers for LPG, solar, and ICS to scale uptake of these alternative energy sources.

¹⁸ A leach field is an underground area where wastewater from toilets or latrines filter into the soil.

- **Build on PERFORM success engaging communities at the traditional authority level by using traditional authorities as an entry point to address degradation and promote livelihood opportunities on customary lands.** Because 75% of land in Malawi is classified as customary, customary lands represent an important opportunity to address degradation at a community level while supporting low-emission, sustainable livelihood opportunities. While this approach is most ready to scale in Northern Malawi, where traditional authorities are structured in a way that confers direct interaction with project participants, PERFORM stakeholders indicated that this approach should be applicable to any traditional authorities in Malawi. Traditional authorities may also provide a useful basis for organization and “nested” approaches to catchment-scale programming.
- **Support harmonization of local and national-level enforcement and penalties for illegal forest activities.** Enforcement in PERFORM project sites was made more difficult, in part, because of the disconnect between local and national level legal frameworks for enforcement, which may attempt to apply penalties of differing severity over the same area. Support should leverage the forest co-management plans and by-laws developed under PERFORM to support harmonization of enforcement efforts, focusing on the district forestry offices as a key link between community-level enforcement efforts and national-level enforcement.
- **Support producers of low emission and/or sustainable products in obtaining certifications of sustainability.** Certifications validating the sustainability and mitigation benefits of products, particularly timber products, can be an important way for private sector entities to differentiate their products and become more competitive in international markets. Private sector stakeholders are not only constrained by the cost of these certifications (“gold standard” certifications cited by PERFORM participants included the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the South African Bureau of Standards), but the lack of knowledge and capacity to understand the requirements and navigate the certification process. Technical assistance to pursue certification could provide an additional value-add to sustainably produced, high value timber and non-timber forest products.
- **Develop “big picture” program design that engages diverse stakeholders in a system of “checks and balances” to build confidence in other stakeholders and in program interventions.** The evaluation team interviewed a variety of stakeholders that individually expressed concern about the inability to grasp “the big picture” on climate change and sustainable landscapes in Malawi. Despite PERFORM efforts to bridge gaps between stakeholders, future programming should consider the strengths and weakness of stakeholders and their respective institutions and support more face time between expert stakeholders, program staff, and program participants. PERFORM had mixed results engaging academic practitioners in particular for the benefit of implementation. While KHP indicated that PERFORM helped them build relationships with academia, they indicated that it would be helpful to gain a better understanding of how the private sector fits into the national landscape. CPI linkages to academia were limited to its interactions with FRIM, but ultimately CPI said they are still having trouble seeing the big picture of their business model because they lack in-house expertise to conduct options analyses, choose and implement climate smart agriculture

interventions, and the ability to leverage the expertise of academia by engaging more interns and researchers. Similarly, the ability of local technical specialists to be engaged in donor programming may be limited if the specialist does not have an “insertion point” due to a lack of government connections, and the few people with strong capacity in each government department are overwhelmed from being repeatedly engaged with other practitioners are sidelined. Engaging practitioners may also be helpful in mainstreaming the use of data-driven approaches and geospatial data/GIS/etc. within and between key Government of Malawi stakeholders by demonstrating how these technologies can be practically applied to achieve climate change mitigation and green growth/economic resilience outcomes.

- **USAID should come to the table to “build the stocks” in the social sector and support diagnostic studies of the social, infrastructure, and productive sectors to determine what is wrong with these sectors and why wide-spread impacts from climate-related disasters persist seemingly unchanged from one event to the next.** Malawi’s key sectors are struggling to remain resilient to climate-induced disasters like major flooding, as well as more constant, longitudinal impacts of climate change. Government of Malawi stakeholders lack an understanding of the challenges facing each key sector that would allow for improved climate change adaptation and disaster risk planning and response, and development partners like the World Bank are engaging in high-risk investments due to a lack of linkages between economic resilience and climate change and disaster resilience. In-depth, diagnostic studies of sectors that are key to Malawi’s economic development are needed to ensure the sustainability of future USAID programming, and to support the Government of Malawi in appropriate planning and capacity building efforts.
- **Support the continued development and implementation of the National Climate Change Fund, including full sectoral involvement, options for co-finance, and the ability of potential grantees to access funds.** Malawi’s nascent National Climate Change Fund could represent an important source of domestic funding for climate change/sustainable landscapes programming and results based payments. The Government of Malawi has already appointed a board for its management and oversight, the EAD and the DEA are already exploring mechanisms to create a revolving fund, and the PERFORM-supported GHG-IS will be used to test the suitability of funding mechanisms. Future programming could support development and implementation of mechanisms to support the fund itself, or could work directly with EAD and the fund’s board to support due diligence, robust selection criteria, and standards for MRV. It is also anticipated that the fund will have different windows/tranches of funding, similar to GCF and other major international funds. These different tranches will target projects under various thematic approaches – community-based forest management, soil and water conservation, etc. The fund will rely on assessments conducted by different sectors to see what the financial and capacity building needs in each sector are – future programming could support the development of these assessments, especially within high-priority sectors like those identified in the PDNA. Future programming could also support existing project concepts in accessing resources from the fund, or could consider implementing a call for proposals similar to what was done under PERFORM, but providing end-to-end technical assistance for proposal development, submission, and

eventual implementation. Sectoral assessments could also represent an opportunity for co-location of additional investments from other sources.

- **Close the loop on market access for women.** While PERFORM implemented activities to support the cultivation of high value, marketable agriculture and non-timber forest products, there was not an explicit emphasis on supporting women to take the next step, whether that was bringing their products to market or forming cooperatives or other groups to leverage the collective outputs of multiple women to increase income benefits. Though limited, the market research and support for market access that PERFORM did provide demonstrated a direct correlation with higher incomes for women producers. Furthermore, there is evidence that women are motivated to start their own ventures even without direct support. In addition to supporting market research and improved access aimed specifically at women and the activities they are most interested in, future programming could use VSLAs established under PERFORM as a springboard for women's cooperatives or livelihood organizations. These activities could be further supported by women-oriented training on financial literacy, business management, marketing, and other relevant topics.

Annexes

Annex I: PERFORM Final Evaluation SOW

Final Performance Evaluation of USAID's Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) Activity

**United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Malawi,
Office of Sustainable Economic Growth (EG)
April 2019**

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Project Information	
Project Name	Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forest in Malawi (PERFORM)
Award Number	Contract number AID-612-TO-14-00003
Original Project Dates	2 September 2014 – 1 September 2019
Original Funding	14.9 million USD
Implementing Partner	TetraTech ARD

I. Background

USAID's Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (referred to hereafter as PERFORM) was specifically designed to align with Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and to promote forest conservation and green growth. It is the main implementation vehicle for the low-emissions partnership between the U.S. and the Government of Malawi (GoM). The project period is 5 years, from 2 September 2014 to 1 September 2019. PERFORM is one of the key activities under "Development Objective 2 (DO2): Sustainable Livelihoods Increased" of USAID Malawi's Country Development Cooperative Strategy (CDCS).

USAID wishes to evaluate the performance of the project to determine what has worked and what has not in order to inform future project design at the USAID Mission in Malawi. Consistent with USAID's ADS 201 Evaluation Policy and its more recent 2018 updates, the primary goal of this evaluation is to provide independent evidence so that USAID/Malawi can determine whether PERFORM achieved its objectives and why or why not. The evaluation will offer lessons learned with wider applicability to other activities in Malawi or beyond.

II. Program Components and Description

Malawi is a Least-Developed Country (LDC), whose population is predominantly rural and heavily dependent on smallholder agriculture. The limited ability of this population to afford commercial fuels has led to a heavy dependence on fuelwood and charcoal for fuel, with the result that Malawi suffers from severe deforestation. Deforestation, agriculture, and land use change are also the leading sources of GHG emissions in Malawi. PERFORM seeks to address the drivers of deforestation and provide alternative livelihood opportunities, including through the potential payment for environmental services associated with the global Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) framework. It builds capacity at the national and local level to implement REDD+ and meet the GoM's commitments to the UNFCCC.

Component 1 (C1): Advance Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) readiness. PERFORM builds capacity in the GoM to advance readiness for REDD+, a framework under the UNFCCC for reducing emissions from the forest, agriculture, and land use sectors, including through potential payments for GHG emissions avoided/sequestered. Activities under this component build GOM capacity for data collection concerning forest carbon stock and GHG emissions from forests, improve the enabling framework related to REDD+, and support implementation of the GoM's REDD+ Program Action Plan.

Component 2 (C2): Increase low-emissions land use opportunities in targeted geographies. The focus of Objective 2 is to directly improve rural Malawian's access to "land use opportunities that increase the economic and livelihood returns to conservation," as part of a REDD+ approach in which initial subnational policies and measures inform the decision on those to be adopted and implemented at a national level. PERFORM's REDD+ site-based pilot activities, carried out in the districts of Machinga, Mzimba, and Ntchisi, use a suite of tailored interventions that address the supply and demand side of the drivers of deforestation. Key partner institutions are the regional and district forestry offices, local forestry organizations, the district assemblies, and the Traditional Authorities, Group Village Heads and Village Heads.

Component 3 (C3): Improve low-emissions development capacities. Objective 3 complements work in Objectives 1 and 2 by focusing on building Malawian capacity to collect, analyze, and report on GHG emissions at the national level. The intent is to support Malawi, as a LDC, to make informed decisions about nationally appropriate mitigation actions and access development assistance tied to climate change mitigation. The Malawian focal institution for Objective 3 is the Environmental Affairs Department

Objective 4 and 5 are cross-cutting, supporting the first three objectives.

Component 4 (C4): Institute pathways for sustainability. Under Objective 4, PERFORM increases sustainability of its USG-financed activities by enhancing the capacity of Malawian institutions, building public-private partnerships, and helping secure additional donor/private funds.

Component 5 (C5): Advance Country Development. Objective 5 (CDCS priorities for integration and institutional strengthening advanced) focuses on finding and leveraging synergy between PERFORM and other USAID funded projects in Malawi, particularly in the focus districts for the CDCS.

PERFORM's link to USAID / Malawi's Country Development Cooperation Strategy. USAID Malawi supports the GoM's Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II) through programming in the areas of agriculture/food security, health, environment/climate change, and democracy and governance. USAID's CDCS hypothesize that if its assistance efforts are integrated across sectors, concentrated geographically, and coordinated better with other development partners (DPs), development results will be enhanced, more sustainable, and lead to the achievement of its CDCS goal: Malawians' quality of life improved. The results framework for the CDCS 2013-2018 contains three DOs that contribute to USAID / Malawi's overall Development Goal of Malawians' "Quality of Life Improved." PERFORM contributes to DO2: Sustainable Livelihoods Increased. PERFORM was specifically designed to align with MGDSII and to promote sustainable livelihoods through forest conservation and REDD+ payment for environmental services (PES) activities at the local level, combined with national REDD+ policies that will help combat deforestation and its attendant erosion and watershed/soil degradation.

PERFORM Results Framework and Development Hypothesis. USAID has identified the development hypothesis under DO2 as: if sustainable livelihoods are increased, then Malawians' Quality of life will be improved. Strengthening resilience to climate change (IR 2.1), adding value to agricultural production (IR 2.2), better nutrition (IR 2.3), and expanding agricultural trade (IR 2.4) together are means to achieve increased sustainable livelihoods.

PERFORM Theory of Change. PERFORM's basic hypothesis is that if the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation are addressed, forest conservation and green growth will be promoted, contributing to sustainable livelihoods and thus improved quality of life for Malawians.

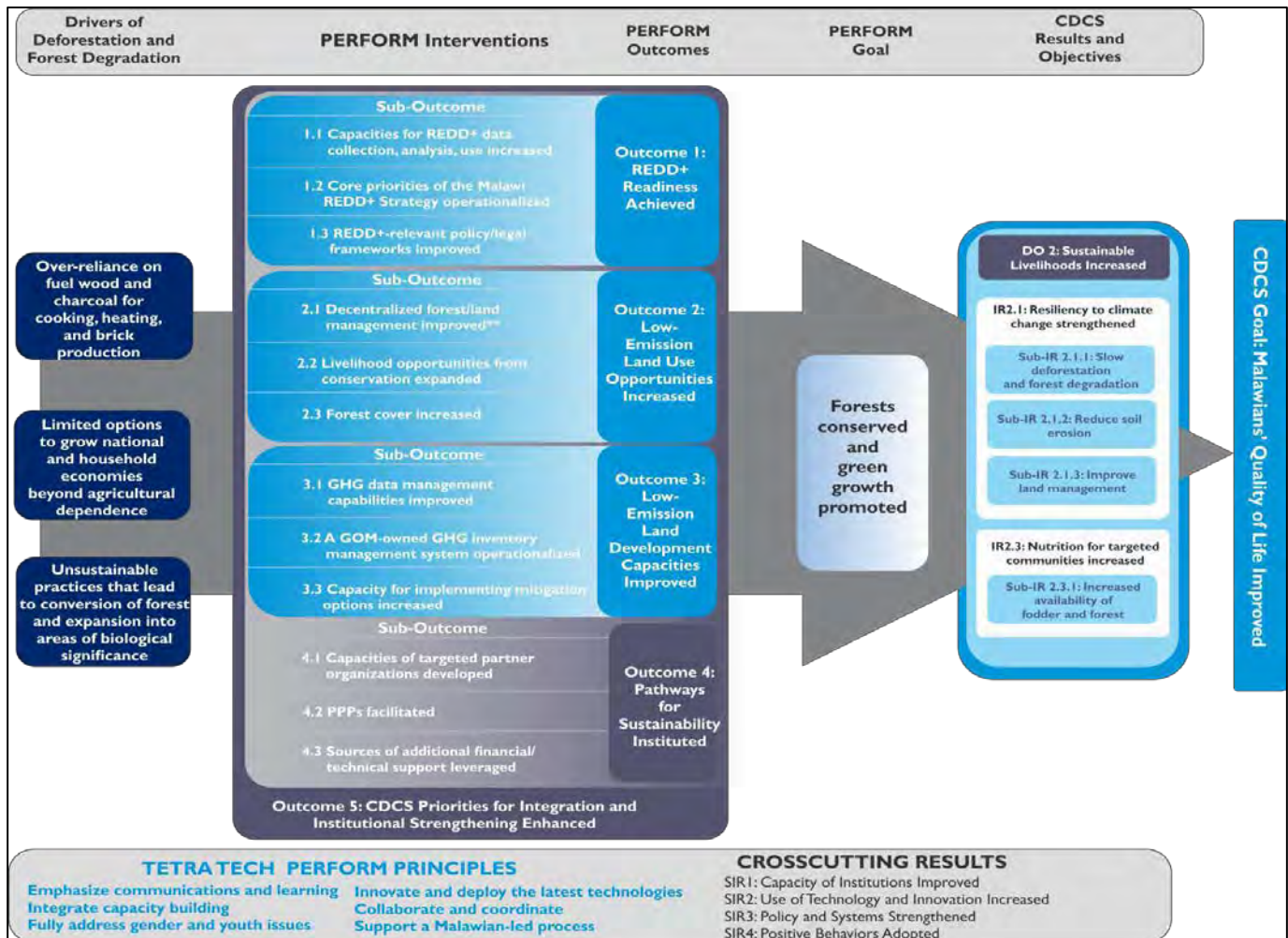
PERFORM's theory of change for achieving these objectives is as follows:

- If capacities of government, private sector, academia, civil society and local villages to analyze, implement and monitor sustainable land management practices, including REDD+; monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV); and social and environmental safeguards (SES) are improved (Objective 1);
- If local and national governance conditions are improved and provide an enabling environment for local and sustainable land management (Objective 1);
- If our demonstration pilot sites demonstrate sustainable land management systems based on improved science and technologies that are scalable to the national level (Objective 2);
- If economic incentives are efficiently, equitably, and sustainably aligned through REDD+ and SES to support these land management practices at the local and national levels, across stakeholder groups, including women and youth (Objective 3); and
- If additional resources are leveraged with other investments through public-private partnerships (PPPs), PES, co-location, coordination, and collaboration (Objective 4); then
 - Forests and soils will be managed more efficiently, equitably, and sustainably (PERFORM

Goal); and

- GHG emissions from land use will be reduced, resilience to climate change will be strengthened, and Malawians' quality of life will be improved (CDCS Goal).

Figure 1: PERFORM Results Framework

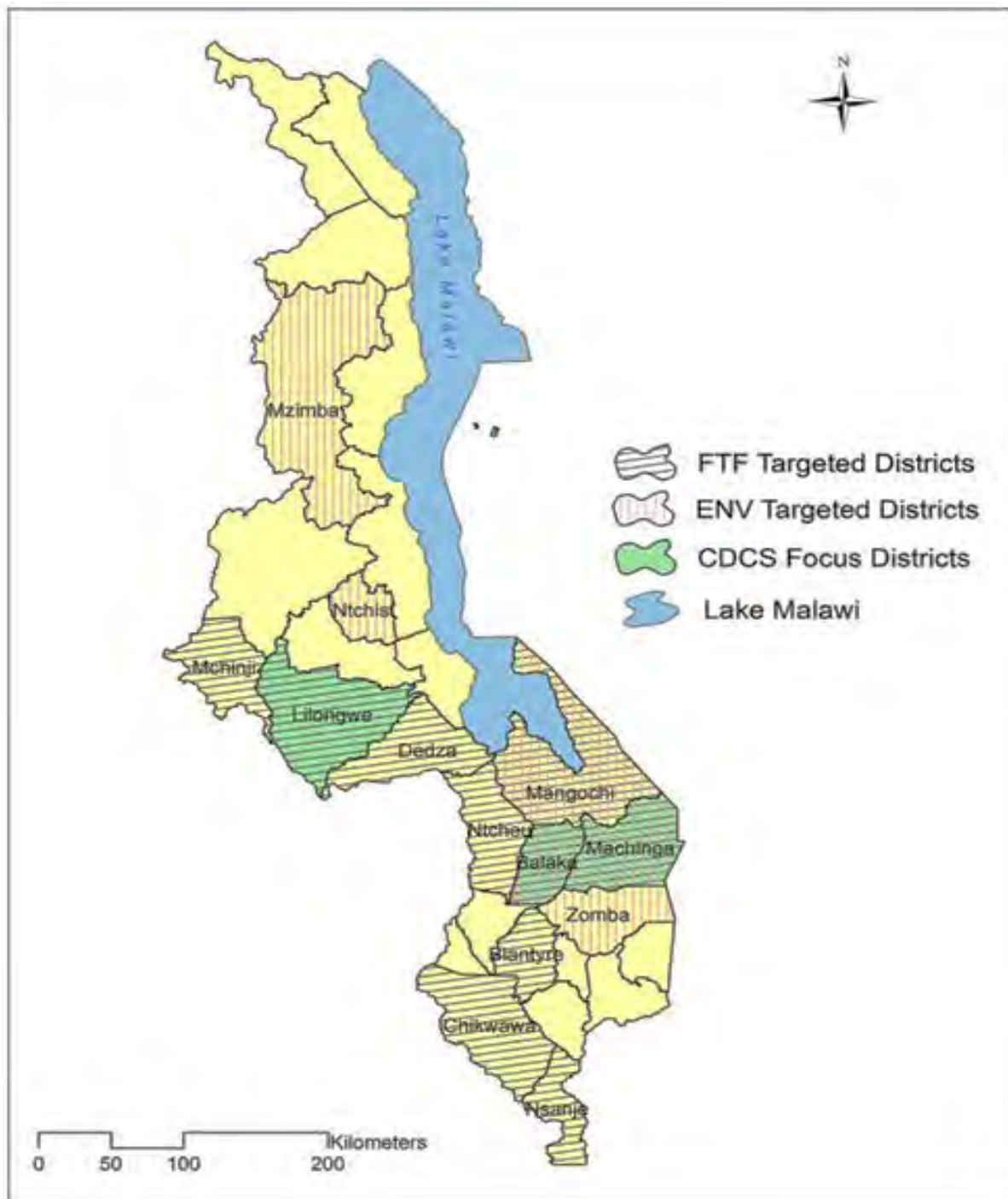


PERFORM Implementing Partners and Target Areas

PERFORM is implemented by Tetra Tech ARD, in association with five subcontractors: Total Land Care (TLC), Center for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA), Michigan State University (MSU), Winrock International (Winrock), and World Resources Institute (WRI).

PERFORM targets five districts in which pilot site-based activities are implemented and these include: Machinga, Mzimba, Lilongwe, Dowa and Ntchisi. Within these districts, PERFORM's activities are anchored by the Liwonde Forest Reserve (Machinga), Liwonde National Park, Perekezi Forest Reserve (Mzimba), and Ntchisi Forest Reserve (Ntchisi), and Thuma Forest Reserve. The map below provides a general picture of where the Office of Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG) activities are implemented including the five PERFORM districts.

Figure 2. Map of Target PERFORM Districts



III. Evaluation Purpose

The primary purpose of this final performance evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the PERFORM design and implementation processes. The evaluation will also inform management regarding effective

implementation strategies that support reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and effective resource management in Malawi.

Major objectives of this evaluation are to:

- 1) Review, analyze, and evaluate the effectiveness of the PERFORM activity in achieving program objectives and contributing to USAID/Malawi's efforts on climate change mitigation and adaptation in Malawi.
- 2) Evaluate major constraints in achieving expected project results.
- 3) Provide specific recommendations and lessons learned on strategies and approaches USAID/Malawi should continue in its future climate change mitigation activities.
- 4) This evaluation will also look at whether the findings, recommendations, and lessons learned from the mid-term evaluation were taken into account during the remainder of the implementation period, and if so, what the impact was of any course corrections that were taken.

IV. Evaluation Questions

The contractor's evaluation of PERFORM must be comprehensive. Whenever possible, the evaluation team should ensure that data is gender disaggregated and subject to gender analysis. The contractor shall assess PERFORM performance and achievements against the performance indicators, targets, reporting requirements, outputs and deliverables described in the approved M&E plan, Annual Work Plans and the agreement. In doing so, the team should pay particular attention to required climate change and biodiversity indicators. While this evaluation is not a data quality audit, the contractor shall assess and describe the quality and use of performance monitoring data and information generated during PERFORM implementation. Evidence-based conclusions and recommendations on how PERFORM used performance monitoring data and information in performance management are required when describing PERFORM's effectiveness in component management.

The following questions should be addressed:

I. How well is PERFORM on track to achieve its climate change mitigation objectives?

- a) To what extent has PERFORM succeeded in building the capacity of government institutions at the national and local levels to develop and implement climate change strategies and action plans, including the National REDD+ Action Plan, the Nationally Developed Contribution (NDC), GHG inventory, the National Charcoal Strategy, and National Forestry Landscape Restoration Strategy etc.?
- b) Have the pilot activities effectively achieved meaningful livelihood and income benefits at the local level to contribute towards reduction of deforestation and forest degradation drivers in the targeted areas?
- c) Has the project strengthened the linkage between national and local efforts?
- d) What are USAID's strategic options for future climate change programming in Malawi?

2. What lessons and implications does PERFORM offer for REDD+ readiness scaling up and likely impacts on REDD+ outcomes?

- a) How effective have PERFORM's efforts to influence the GoM's policy and regulatory environments for climate change been, including the amendment of the Forestry Act, National Charcoal strategy, NFLRS

and strengthening of the GIS lab at the college of wildlife and forestry?

3. Has PERFORM's engagement with the private sector to reduce drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and increase local income been effective to leverage private sector equity to support viable private sector solutions? Have the activities been profitable and sustainable, can they be scaled up and if so, how?

4. How effective has PERFORM been in promoting women and youth empowerment and gender equality in its activities?

a) How effective is PERFORM in increasing women and youth access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)?

V. Evaluation Methodology

The Contractor must propose a robust evaluation methodology to answer the key evaluation questions identified above. The evaluation methodology will follow a mixed-method approach using both quantitative and qualitative techniques in gathering reliable data and valid evidence of project outcomes or impacts including review of relevant PERFORM, USAID, GoM, and other secondary data sources. The contractor must develop a **Mixed Methods Evaluation Design Matrix** that will detail the data source, data collection methods, data collection instruments and analysis of data to answer each of the evaluation questions. By using a mixed-method approach, the evaluation team is expected to gain insight on the progress of PERFORM project activities (mostly from quantitative data collected by the project and others) and the processes (mostly qualitative information provided by the project staff that may be validated and enhanced by key informants) that lead to those impacts. It should generate gender-disaggregated data and reflect attention to gender relations such as the participation of women in training. Sequential (whenever applicable and advantageous) and iterative approaches should be used to integrate the mixture of methods at various stages of the evaluation.

The evaluators should utilize several different, yet complementary and inter-related forms of gathering information/data such as those described below. The contractor is expected to utilize its expert judgment and evaluation best practices in selecting which methodological components to include in the evaluation design.

Document Review. Evaluation team members will review documents throughout the evaluation process including program reports, relevant studies to ensure that comprehensive and grounded best practices will be identified.

Key Informant Interviews. The team will conduct one-on-one interviews with a variety of stakeholders including the most relevant GoM ministries and agencies, local government authorities, private partners and community leaders, bi- and multilateral development partners supporting GoM's REDD+, forest conservation, and climate change mitigation efforts. This will be done administering a semi-structured or structured questionnaire.

Self-assessment. The implementing partners will respond to a self-assessment either through a questionnaire or standard interview checklist put together by the evaluation team and approved by USAID before use.

Expert Opinion Survey. Utilizing expert opinion is a technique used increasingly in evaluation. The evaluation team, with the approval of USAID, can apply this method as well.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD). FGD (small group of 6 to 10 people) will be used to lead open discussion through a skilled moderator to gather semi-structured qualitative data. The pre-selected participants will discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the moderator.

No more than 10 questions will be addressed by a group. These sessions will encourage free flowing discussion about the activity.

Mini Survey. This type of survey is small (30-40 participants) and can be performed rapidly in the field without analytical software such as SPSS or a large questionnaire. The sample size is not statistically significant. However, this type of analysis can be used to triangulate with other methods. Because of the small sample size this type of survey can be implemented quickly when time and resources are constrained.

All the methodological strengths and weaknesses should be explicitly described in the evaluation report. Prior to the start of the evaluation, the evaluation team shall meet with SEG office to refine the evaluation questions and methodology, and address any other concerns the SEG office may have.

Limitations to Data Collection. There is little time for comprehensive surveys for this evaluation. No other limitations exist that IBTCI is aware of.

VI. Deliverables

All deliverables are internal to USAID, MELs and the Evaluation Team unless otherwise instructed by USAID. Evaluation deliverables include:

Evaluation Team Planning Meeting. Essential in organizing the team's efforts. During the meeting, the team should review and discuss the SOW in its entirety, clarify team members' role and responsibilities, work plan, develop data collection methods, review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the assignment and instruments and to prepare for the in-brief with USAID/Malawi.

In-brief Meeting with USAID/Malawi. The in-brief meeting should occur within two working days of international team members' arrival in Malawi.

Inception Report. At the In-brief meeting, the Evaluation Team will provide an inception report that will outline key aspects of the Evaluation, including the Work Plan, Evaluation Design Matrix, and proposed Data Collection Instruments (e.g., interview guides). See more detail below.

- **Work Plan.** The Contractor will prepare a detailed work plan that includes task timeline, methodology outlining approach to be used in answering each evaluation question, team responsibility, document review, key informant and stakeholder meetings, site visits, survey implementation, travel time, debriefings (for USAID, implementing partner and, if decided, the GoM), draft and final report writing. The work plan will include a data analysis plan. The work plan will be submitted to the MELs and PERFORM Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) at USAID/Malawi for approval no later than the fifth day the Evaluation team arrives in Malawi.
- **Evaluation Design Matrix.** A table that lists each evaluation question and the corresponding information sought, information sources, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and limitations. The matrix should be finalized and shared with USAID/Malawi before evaluation field work starts. It should also be included as an annex in the evaluation report.
- **Data Collection Instruments.** Development and submission of data collection instruments to USAID/Malawi during the design phase and after the evaluation is completed.

Regular Updates. The Evaluation Team Leader will brief the MELs and PERFORM CORs, on progress with the evaluation on at least a weekly basis, in person or by electronic communication. Any delays or complications must be quickly communicated to USAID/Malawi as early as possible to allow quick resolution and to minimize any disruptions to the evaluation. Emerging opportunities to strengthen the evaluation should also be discussed with USAID/Malawi as they arise.

Debriefing with USAID. The Contractor will present the major preliminary evaluation findings to USAID/Malawi through a PowerPoint presentation before the team's departure from country. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and issues as well as any preliminary recommendations. The team will consider USAID and MELS comments and incorporate them in the Draft Evaluation Report.

Stakeholders Workshop. The team will present the major findings from the evaluation to key stakeholders (as appropriate and as defined by USAID) through a PowerPoint presentation prior to the team's departure from the country. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and activities only, with no recommendations for possible modifications to project approaches, results, or activities. The team will consider key stakeholder comments and incorporate them appropriately in drafting the evaluation report.

Draft Evaluation Report. A draft report on the findings and recommendations should be submitted to USAID/Malawi and MELS 10 working days after departure of international team members from Malawi. The report must be no more than 50 pages in length (excluding annexes) and comply with the Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports (see annexes). The written report should clearly describe findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The draft report must be of high quality with no grammatical errors or typos. A report is high quality when it represents a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why. The draft report must have well-constructed sentences that are presented in a way that clearly presents findings, conclusions and recommendations. The report should answer all the evaluation questions and the structure of the report should make it clear how the questions were answered. The draft report must meet the criteria set forth under the Final Report section below. USAID will provide comments on the draft report within 10 working days of submission.

Video Teleconference (VTC) Presentation to the Mission, E3, and AFR/SD. The Evaluation team will lead and conduct a presentation via VTC to the Mission, E3 and AFR/SD after the team's revision of the final report based on USAID's comments and feedback.

Final Evaluation Report. The Contractor will submit two versions of the Final Evaluation Report that incorporate Mission comments and suggestions no later than five working days after USAID/Malawi provides written comments on the Draft Evaluation Report. The format of the final reports is provided below. The report will be submitted in English, electronically. The public version of the final report that will be uploaded to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) will *not* include the annex on "Strategic Options for Future Programming" – evaluation objective 3. The USAID-only, procurement sensitive version of the final report will include the aforementioned annex on evaluation objective 3. The Contractor must ensure that Appendix I of the USAID Evaluation Policy – Criteria to Ensure the Quality of the Evaluation Report is followed. The final report should at a minimum meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not, and why.
- The evaluation report shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the MELS and PERFORM CORs.
- The evaluation report must include a separate annex to answer objective 3 "Specific recommendations and lessons learned on strategies and approaches USAID/Malawi

should continue in its future climate change mitigation activities.”

- As this annex is procurement sensitive, it will not be shared with any other entity other than USAID/Malawi.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people’s opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a table of contents, table of figures (as appropriate), acronyms, executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, research design and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Where appropriate, the evaluation should utilize tables and graphs to link with data and other relevant information. The report should include, in the annex, any dissenting views by any team member or by USAID on any of the findings or recommendations. The report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes. A second version of this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information will be submitted (also electronically, in English) to DEC and for dissemination among implementing partners and other stakeholders.

All quantitative data, if gathered, should be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. A thumb drive with all the data should be provided to the MELS COR and MELS Project Director.

The final report will be edited and formatted by the Contractor and provided to USAID/Malawi 5 working days after the Mission has reviewed the content and approved the final revised version of the report.

VII. Evaluation Team Composition

The team will include one international and one local consultant. The former will be a specialist in the following areas of expertise: project evaluations and assessments (ideally natural resource management evaluations), forest conservation, climate change, greenhouse gas inventories, REDD+ and/or related scientific fields. The local consultant should have a background in forestry, livelihoods, and/or natural resource conservation.

Team Leader/REDD+ Specialist (International). This expert will serve as Team Leader (TL) for the PERFORM Evaluation. The Team Leader/ REDD+ Specialist will be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of project implementation according to the M&E plan, while addressing the evaluation questions above. S/he will provide technical leadership with respect to GHG emissions/inventories and

REDD+ policy implementation at both the national and local level. S/he will also provide technical leadership on the evaluation question concerning USAID's strategic options for future climate change programming in Malawi. The Team Leader/ REDD+ Specialist will provide overall leadership for the team, and s/he will finalize the evaluation design, coordinate activities, arrange periodic meetings, consolidate individual input from team members, and coordinate the process of assembling the final findings and recommendations into a high quality document. S/he will lead the preparation and presentation of the key evaluation findings and recommendations to the USAID/Malawi team and other major partners.

The TL should have the following attributes/qualifications and experience:

- S/he should have a postgraduate degree in an appropriate field, with at least 10 years of international experience including leading evaluation teams, ideally for natural resources management (NRM) and/or climate change projects.
- Technical experience in GHG emissions/inventories and REDD+ policy implementation.
- Leadership experience with USAID's strategic options for future CC programming in Malawi.
- Familiarity with USAID regulations and systems including performance monitoring, gender policies and guidance, project management, budgeting and financial analysis, and reporting.
- Should be experienced in preparing documents that are objective, evidence-based, and well organized.
- Previous experience in REDD+/Global Climate Change (GCC), e.g., Focus on mitigation and REDD+, MRV and/or policy.

Experience in international donor development program management and overseeing multiple program areas simultaneously is highly preferred.

- Practical experience in project implementation as well as demonstrated knowledge of climate policy, including familiarity with issues related to UNFCCC negotiations is highly preferred.
- Relevant experience in Malawi or Eastern/Southern Africa is preferred
- Excellent oral and written skills in English are required.
- **A separate scope of work for this position will define its role, including tasks and Level of Effort (LOE), in the two concurrent evaluations.** The LOE shown in the table below for this position is for the combined workload.

Natural Resource Management/Livelihoods Specialist (Local): The Local Natural Resource Management/Livelihoods Specialist will have familiarity and experience with the Malawian context including issues that are unique to Malawi. This person will participate in team meetings, key informant interviews, group meetings, site visits, and draft the sections of the report relevant to his/her expertise and role in the team. S/he also will participate in presenting the report to USAID and/or other stakeholders and be responsible for addressing pertinent comments provided by USAID/Malawi and/or other stakeholders.

The Local Natural Resource/Livelihoods Specialist should:

- Have a postgraduate degree in international development, forestry, natural resources, economic growth, environment, or a related field.

- Be a Malawi national with at least 4 years of field experience in evaluation with some sectoral experience in REDD+ and livelihoods projects/interventions.
- Professional language fluency in multiple local Malawian languages is highly preferred.

This team will be supported by a local logistics coordinator who will arrange transportation, hotels and air time usage for the team. USAID may add other people to the team as observers and resource people, including USAID representatives, and GoM personnel. USAID will meet all costs of these additional team members.

VIII. Existing Sources of Information

The evaluation team should consult a broad range of background documents apart from project documents provided by USAID /Malawi. These should include, but are not limited to, documents on GCC, REDD+, and forest conservation, both in and outside of Malawi. The evaluation team should also review relevant GoM national strategies and policies, as well as relevant projects and strategies of other aid agencies active in Malawi. USAID, MELS, and the PERFORM project will provide the assessment team with a package of briefing materials, including:

- The agreement for PERFORM activity;
- M&E plan for PERFORM;
- Project quarterly and annual reports, work plans and management reviews developed as part of routine monitoring;
- Training reports;
- Data Quality Assessment (DQA) reports;
- USAID/Malawi CDCS 2014-19 (Public version);
- USAID Malawi DO:2 Performance Management Plan (PMP);
- GoM INDC to UNFCCC;
- GoM National REDD+ Action Plan;
- Performance Indicator Tracking Table (PITT);
- M&E tools;
- Training & Beneficiary Database;
- PERFORM Baseline Report;
- USAID Evaluation Policy; and
- Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Policy.

Conflict of Interest. All evaluation team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated. USAID will provide the conflict of interest forms. See Annex I for the Template.

IX. Level of Effort (LOE) of Study Team by Task Deliverables

Below is an estimate of the evaluation level of effort (LOE).

Level of Efforts of Team Members by Task Deliverables		
Task/Deliverable	Duration / LOE in Days	
	Team Leader/ REDD+ Specialist	Local Natural Resource/ Livelihoods Specialist
<i>Review background documents and home-based preparation work</i>	5	5
<i>Travel to Malawi</i>	2	0
<i>Team planning meeting and meeting with USAID</i>	2	2
<i>Development of Evaluation Work Plan (concurrent with document review and initial meetings)</i>	2	2
<i>Development of data collection instruments</i>	2	2
<i>Information and data collection. Includes interviews with key informants (stakeholders and USAID staff) and site visits</i>	19	19
<i>Discussion, analysis, and preliminary draft evaluation report in country including discussion with USAID</i>	5	5
<i>Debrief meetings with USAID (preliminary draft report due to USAID)</i>	1	1
<i>Debrief meetings with key stakeholders</i>	1	1
<i>Team Leader meets with Technical Specialists and USAID to synthesize findings/discussion</i>	1	1
<i>Depart Malawi/Travel to U.S.</i>	2	0
<i>Finalization of draft and internal review (IBTCI) remote</i>	5	5
<i>USAID provides comments on draft report</i>	0	0
<i>Team revises draft report and submits final to USAID (out of country)</i>	10	4
<i>USAID completes final review</i>	0	0
<i>Editing and formatting of report</i>	5	2
<i>Presentation of Report to Mission, E3 &, AFR/SD</i>	1	1

X. Scheduling and Logistics

Funding and Logistical Support. USAID/Malawi's MELS project will be responsible for all off-shore and in-country administrative and logistical support, including identification and fielding appropriate local

staff. They will take care of arranging and scheduling meetings, international and local travel, hotel bookings, working/office spaces, computers, printing, and photocopying. The Logistics Specialist will arrange field visits, local travel, hotel, and appointments with stakeholders and provide translation services.

Scheduling (see attached table). Work is to be carried out over a period of approximately 9 weeks. At this point in time, we anticipate that the evaluation would begin in early June, with work in Malawi commencing on/about June 18th, field work completed in mid-July and the final report and close out concluding in late August. The anticipated June start date provides over one month to finalize, clear the SOW, recruit and approve the consultants, and complete background research prior to arrival. See Annex-I for Malawi Mission Holiday Schedule.

A six-day work week (Monday-Saturday) is authorized for the evaluation team while in Malawi, however, no overtime or premium pay is authorized. The evaluation team will submit a work plan with timeline as part of the evaluation methodology proposal and develop a GANTT chart displaying the time periods during which activities occur.

Team mobilization will include: travel approval; airline tickets; visa; lodging; work facility and vehicle transport arrangements; dates for meetings with USAID/Malawi SEG staff and key contacts; in-country travel agenda; and accommodations.

Conflict of Interest Form Template

Disclosure of Real or Potential Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluations

Instructions: Evaluations of USAID projects will be undertaken so that they are not subject to the perception or reality of biased measurement or reporting due to conflict of interest.¹ For external evaluations, all evaluation team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated.²

Evaluators of USAID projects have a responsibility to maintain independence so that opinions, conclusions, judgments, and recommendations will be impartial and will be viewed as impartial by third parties. Evaluators and evaluation team members are to disclose all relevant facts regarding real or potential conflicts of interest that could lead reasonable third parties with knowledge of the relevant facts and circumstances to conclude that the evaluator or evaluation team member is not able to maintain independence and, thus, is not capable of exercising objective and impartial judgment on all issues associated with conducting and reporting the work.

Operating Unit leadership, in close consultation with the Contracting Officer, will determine whether the real or potential conflict of interest is one that should disqualify an individual from the evaluation team or require recusal by that individual from evaluating certain aspects of the project(s). In addition, if evaluation team members gain access to proprietary information of other companies in the process of conducting the evaluation, then they must agree with the other companies to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.³

Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

1. Immediate family or close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant/material though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.
3. Current or previous direct or significant/material though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.
4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

¹ USAID Evaluation Policy (p. 8); USAID Contract Information Bulletin 99-17; and Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 9.5, Organizational Conflicts of Interest, and Subpart 3.10, Contractor Code of Business Ethics and Conduct.

² USAID Evaluation Policy (p. 11)

³ FAR 9.505-4(b)

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name		
Title		
Organization		
Evaluation Position?	☐ Team Leader	☐ Team member
Evaluation Award Number (contract or other instrument)		
USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)		
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes ☐ No	
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: <i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i> . Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. . Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. . Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. . Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. . Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. . Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.		

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	
Date	

Annex II: PERFORM Final Evaluation Matrix

Type of Power/Evidence Needed Description, Comparison, Cause and Effect (and notes on any special requirements or sources of data)	Methods for Data Collection Records, Structured Observation, KIs, Mini-Survey		Sampling or Selection Approach (if one is needed)	Data Management Frequency Trend Analysis Tabulation Analysis
	Method	Data Source		

Evaluation Question 1: How well is PERFORM on track to achieve its climate change mitigation objectives?

I a. To what extent has PERFORM succeeded in building the capacity of government institutions at the national and local levels to develop and implement climate change strategies and action plans, including the National REDD+ Action Plan, NDC, GHG inventory, National Charcoal Strategy, National Forestry Landscape Restoration Strategy?

I b. Have the pilot activities effectively achieved meaningful livelihood and income benefits at the local level to contribute towards reduction of deforestation and forest degradation drivers in the targeted areas?

I c. Has the project strengthened the linkage between national and local efforts?

I d. What are USAID's strategic options for future climate change programming in Malawi?

Evidence of support for achievement of objectives/results) and comparison of progress reported for PERFORM to milestones and indicator targets for REDD+ readiness, including technical, functional capacity building evidence collected for PERFORM on local livelihood benefits, threats, and challenges associated with sub-national targets tracked and supported by the program data and stakeholder feedback collected on major factors influencing achievement or non-achievement of	1. Desk review of secondary sources applicable to the PERFORM PoP; 2. Key informant interviews with central ("national") government officials; 3. Interviews with district-level ("subnational") officials, including forest offices and district assemblies; 4. Interviews with civil society organizations; 5. Interviews with traditional authorities, (group) village heads (Ib); 6. Direct observation of pilot activities (Ib); 7. Key informant and/or FGDs with program participants in pilot sites (Ib), including women-only FGDs if/where applicable; 8. Key informant interviews with collaborators in pilot sites (Ib); 9. Desk review of program reporting documents	1. Department of Forestry; regional and district forestry offices; local forestry organizations 2. Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining 3. Environmental Affairs Department 4. Local councils (traditional authorities, natural resource committees, group village heads, village heads), CBOs, and collaborating organizations 5. Site-based pilots in Machinga, Mzimba, Ntchisi 6. Secondary sources, including but not limited to official GoM reporting on milestones; quantitative data and work plans, meeting minutes, quarterly, annual and other reports and documentation from PERFORM; other USAID reporting on low emission development and REDD+ in Malawi relevant to the PERFORM PoP; third party reporting on REDD readiness (REDD Desk, GCF, UNFCCC, UNREDD, etc.)	1. Secondary sources and any qualitative and/or quantitative therefrom derived must be applicable to the PERFORM period of performance 2. The evaluation team recognizes the importance of considering differential impacts of the program on men and women, and will include a gender assessment component as part of the desk review and field assessments 3. The evaluation team will conduct field assessments in each of the three pilot districts; if deemed appropriate, selection criteria can be developed, and sites may be selected using extreme/deviant sampling (selecting information-rich sites that are likely to be considered outstanding successes or notable failures in order to answer the question "which	1. Analytical components of PERFORM and reporting progress reported milestones and/or To the possible evaluation apply each evaluation and request gender data to cross gender their capacity partici decision 2. The evaluation team will use a framework to examine dimensions 3. The evaluation team will use a framework to examine dimensions
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indicators and milestones			pilots could we learn the most from?") OR maximum variation sampling in order to capture and describe the challenges and successes that cut across all pilots (selecting pilots are that very different but focusing on themes and issues that emerge from each)	equity, distribution, process and c 4. Data evaluation including limited GHG deforestation change institutions will be analyzed: PERF quarterly reports as this validation data is applicable
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Annex III: List of Documents Reviewed

Document Name	Date	Organization
Midterm Evaluation of the Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) Project	2017	IBTCI
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Data Gap Assessment for Malawi's Greenhouse Gas Inventory System	2016	Tetra Tech ARD and Winrock
Options Assessment for Malawi's INDC Development Process	2015	Tetra Tech ARD and Winrock
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Malawi National Forest Inventory 2018 Analysis Report	2018	Winrock International
Woodfuel Integrated Supply/Demand Overview Mapping (WISDOM) Malawi: Analysis of Woodfuel Demand, Supply and Harvesting Sustainability	2019	Winrock International
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Options Analysis for the Malawi REDD+ Program Action Plan: 2014-2019	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Gender Analysis and Plan	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Reference Level Design for Malawi REDD+: Options Review and Recommended Technical Approach	2017	Winrock International
Promotion of Urban Energy Solutions using DCA: Initial Findings Out-Briefing	2019	PERFORM (John Fay)
Malawi REDD+ Program: National Forest Reference Levels	2019	GoM
National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy	2016	GoM
Malawi National REDD+ Strategy	2019	GoM
National Resilience Plan: Breaking the Cycle of Food Insecurity in Malawi	2017	GoM
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP), January 2015 – September 2019	2019	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP)	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Baseline Survey	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Restoration Opportunities Assessment Report-Liwonde Forest Reserve Landscapes	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Work Plans: Financial Year 2018: October 1, 2017 – September, 30 2018	2017	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Work Plans: Financial Year 2017: October 1, 2016 – September, 30 2017	2016	Tetra Tech ARD

Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Work Plans: Financial Year 2016: October 1, 2015 – September, 30 2016	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Work Plans: Financial Year 2015: January 2015 – September 2015	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): First Quartely Report (October-December 2014)	2014	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Second Quartely Report (January-March 2015)	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Third Quartely Report (April-June 2015)	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Report (October 2014-September 2015)	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): First Quartely Report (October-December 2015)	2015	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Second Quartely Report (January-March 2016)	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Third Quartely Report (April-June 2016)	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Report (October 2015-September 2016)	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): First Quartely Report (October-December 2016)	2016	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Second Quartely Report (January-March 2017)	2017	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Third Quartely Report (April-June 2017)	2017	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Report (October 2016-September 2017)	2017	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): First Quartely Report (October-December 2017)	2017	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Second Quartely Report (January-March 2018)	2018	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Third Quartely Report (April-June 2018)	2018	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Annual Report (October 2016-September 2018)	2018	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): First Quartely Report (October-December 2018)	2017	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Second Quartely Report (January-March 2019)	2018	Tetra Tech ARD
Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM): Third Quartely Report (April-June 2019)	2018	Tetra Tech ARD

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Annex IV: List of FGDs and KII Conducted

NAME	DESIGNATION	Institution
Mr. Bennon Yassin	Deputy Director	Environmental Affair Department
Mr. Julius Ng'oma	Executive Director	Civil Society Network on Climate Change
Mr. Thoko Malunga	Energy Officer	Department of Energy Affairs
Mr. Ted Kamoto	Deputy Director	Department of Forestry
Ms. Alice Gwedeza	Deputy Surveyor General	Surveys Department
Ms. Gertrude Kambauwa	Deputy Director	Land Resources Conservation Department
Mr. Samuel Gama	Disaster Management Officer	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
Mr. Francis Nkoka	Senior Disaster Management Expert	World Bank Malawi Office
Mr. Robert Kafakoma	Director	Training Support for Partners (TSP)
Sothini Nyirenda	Programmes Manager	United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP)
Tawonga Mtegha	Director	Consolidated Processing Industries
Nebson Chiloko	Manager	Kawandama Hills Plantations
Mr. Lifred Banda	District Forestry Officer	Mzimba District Council
Mr. Precious Kamtsitsi	Director of Planning and Development	Mzimba District Council
Mr. Somanje	Assistant District Forestry Officer	Machinga District Council
Fletcher Mbale	Forest Extension Worker	Mzimba District Council
FGDs for the Final Evaluation		
Chinjoka Chirwa Group Villages	Villages close to Perekezi Forest Reserve	Mzimba District
Mjojo Mhlanga Group Villages	Villages close to Perekezi Forest Reserve	Mzimba District
Samson Shumba Group Villages	Villages close to Perekezi Forest Reserve	Mzimba District
Lucheche Cooperative	Committee Members for the Cooperative	Mzimba District
Sambakusi Group Villages	Villages close to Ntchisi Forest Reserve	Ntchisi District
Nyanga Group Villages	Villages close to Ntchisi Forest Reserve	Ntchisi District
Mlelemba Group Villages	Villages close to Liwonde Forest Reserve	Machinga District
Mbando Group Villages	Villages close to Liwonde Forest Reserve	Machinga District
Mulipa Group Villages	Villages close to Liwonde Forest Reserve	Machinga District
Jackson Goma	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Swaseni Chirwa	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Tiffiness Gausi	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Dollar Luhana	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Nailless Kanyinji	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Elinesi Mkandawire	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council

Mphatso Gondwe	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Mark Nyirenda	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Rodgers Msofi	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Kingsley Nyirongo	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Anna Mkandawire	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Charles Theu	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Robert Nkhata	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Watson Banda	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Clever Shumba	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Samuel Nkhata	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Levison Chirwa	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Harson Chirwa	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Alick Chirwa	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Moses Moyo	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Mickness Ngulube	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Josephine Nyika	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Simbeyi Nyirenda	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Stellia Nyirenda	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Abraham Banda	Lead Farmer	Mzimba District Council
Robert Nyirenda	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
MWalimo Chirwa	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Idah Phiri	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Malita Hunga	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Agness Moyo	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Helena Manda	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Vero Chirwa	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Vuja Nkhoma	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Stella Mwale	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Memory Mbewe	VNRMC member	Mzimba District Council
Stayness Phiri	VNRMC Chairperson	Mzimba District Council
Henry Zimba	VH	Mzimba District Council
Elijah Ngulube	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Mary Chunga	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Bright Shumba	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Chinganyama Nkhata	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Chapuma Nkhata	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Gift Mhlanga	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Steven Zimba	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Lymod SS Chirwa	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Joseph Nkhoma	GVH	Mzimba District Council
Chance Nkhoswe	CEW	Mzimba District Council
Henry Shawa	CEW	Mzimba District Council
Steven Mkandawire	CEW	Mzimba District Council
Jeremiah Nyirenda	CEW	Mzimba District Council

Annex V: Data Collection Instruments

National and Sub-National Government Officials: KII Protocol

Information for Identification/Interview Record	
Name of Interviewer:	
Date of Interview:	
Location of Interview (District/City, Country):	
Interview Start Time:	
Interview End Time:	
Name of Respondent:	
Title of Respondent:	
Respondent Affiliation/Relation to PERFORM:	
Respondent Sex:	

Introduction and Informed Consent

“IBTCI is conducting a final performance evaluation of the PERFORM activity being implemented by Tetra Tech. We would be very grateful if we could ask you some questions to help us to better understand the general context of sustainable forest management, climate change mitigation efforts, and resilience and capacity building in your area. Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, the interview will last a maximum of 60 minutes. Your contribution is very important to us and we appreciate your time and input. Results of this interview may be used in IBTCI performance evaluation reporting; however, your responses will remain anonymous and we will only include your name in the list of interviewees. No personal identifying information will be stored with your interview. At any time in the interview, you can decide to stop participating. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

Section 1: Background on Respondent

Enumerator: I'd like to start by asking you a bit about yourself and your role as a government official.

Can you please tell us your title/position? For how long have you been in this position? Please describe your roles and responsibilities as a government official in this area (i.e., district, city, region, depending on informant).

What are the specific roles and responsibilities of your office related to forest management (incl REDD+ Action Plan), climate change mitigation (incl INDC), climate resilience (incl NFLRS and NRS)?

Section 2: capacity to develop and implement climate change strategies and action plans (including the National REDD+ Action Plan, the Nationally Developed Contribution (NDC), GHG inventory, the National Charcoal Strategy, and National Forestry Landscape Restoration Strategy etc)

Enumerator: Next, I'd like to ask you about the improved capacity to develop and implement climate change strategies and Action Plans in your institution.

Enumerator Note: It is important to use context-specific details of the field site to guide this portion of the interview. The following are the key activities for some of the Department PERFORM worked with:

Department of Forestry: National Forest Inventory, National REDD+ Action Plan, The National Charcoal Strategy, the NFLRS, the Forestry Act, Support to Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife, study (PhD and MSc) support, support to Pilot sites;

Environmental Affairs Department: GHG Inventory, National Determined Contribution (NDCs), NAMAs, other investments in mitigation and resilience;

Department of Energy Affairs: The National Charcoal Strategy, NAMAs, Investments in mitigation and resilience;

Department of Climate Change Management: REDD+ Action Plan, GHG Inventory, NAMAs, and Investment on Resilience;

REDD+ Expert Working Group: Support to plan and implement the National REDD+ Strategy;

Department of Land Resources: REDD+ Action Plan, National Resilience Plan, GHG Inventory;

Department of Disaster Management Affairs: National Resilience Plan;

Surveyor General: GHG Inventory, National Forestry Inventory (GIS databases);

District Councils: Pilot Activities, contribution Regulatory Bye-Laws, Contribution to Socio-Economic Profiles;

Turning specifically to PERFORM, can you please tell me about the activities of PERFORM taking place in your institution/area? How has your office been involved in these activities?

How has the involvement of your office in forest management, climate change mitigation and resilience activities and policy initiatives changed because of the work of PERFORM?

In your opinion, have PERFORM helped your institution, or other government offices in your area, to improve forest management, climate change mitigation and resilience initiatives? Please explain why or why not.

What are the key roles for your institution in the REDD+ action planning and implementation?

How was your institution involved in the data collection concerning forest carbon stock and GHG emissions?

How was your institution involved in nationally appropriate mitigation actions and access to development assistance tied to climate change mitigation?

Who does your institution work with on land use opportunities that increase the economic and livelihood returns to conservation initiatives? (*PROBE i.e. Development Partners, other levels of government, NGO, task forces, etc*)

How does your institution link up with local/national efforts on forest management, mitigation and resilience building?

Section 3: PERFORM lessons and implications offered for REDD+ readiness scaling up and likely impacts on REDD+ outcomes

Enumerator: Let's talk some more about future forest conservation initiatives and policies

How did PERFORM's support the GoM's policy and regulatory environments for climate change, including the amendment of the Forestry Act, National Charcoal strategy, NFLRS?

Did you receive any technology/infrastructure support (computers, etc.) from USAID/Malawi as part of PERFORM? Please explain how this support has helped you achieve your objectives.

How has PERFORM supported you to leverage Development Partners/NGO/private sector equity to support viable private sector solutions for reducing deforestation and vulnerability to climate change?

In your opinion, do you think the pilot activities effectively achieved meaningful livelihood and income benefits at the local level to contribute towards reduction of deforestation and forest degradation drivers and vulnerability to climate change?

Were the benefits equally accessible to women and the youth?

What do you think USAID/Malawi can do better for future climate change programming in Malawi?

In your opinion, what are some of the biggest challenges different levels of government (i.e. city/districts, national) face in terms of supporting climate change mitigation?

Section 4: Interview Wrap-up/Conclusion

From your perspective, what has been the most important outcome of PERFORM in your area so far?

From what you have observed, how else could PERFORM support your institution to mitigate deforestation, forest degradation and climate change?

Do you have any final comments on PERFORM that you wish to share at this time?

Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?

Focus Group Discussion Checklist

Information for FGD Record:

Name of Facilitator:	
Date of FGD:	
Location of FGD (Field Site, Village, District):	
FGD Start Time:	
FGD End Time:	

Participant roster

	Name of Participant:	Did the participant consent?	Gender of participant:	Occupation/Role of participant	Participant Affiliation/Relation to X:
	<i>Make a complete list of all individuals taking part in the focus group.</i>	<i>All respondents must consent. 1=Yes 2=No</i>	<i>1=Male 2=Female</i>		
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Section I: Introduction and Informed Consent

“Hello, my name is _____ and this is _____. We are members of a team from International Technical and Business Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI) conducting a performance evaluation of the Protecting Ecosystems and Restoring Forests in Malawi (PERFORM) activity. We are here today to ask you some questions to better understand the issues surrounding deforestation and forest degradation in your community. Your participation in this discussion is entirely voluntary. Results of this discussion may be used in PERFORM performance evaluation reporting. Your responses will remain anonymous and no identifying information will be stored with your discussion. At any time in the discussion, you can decide to stop participating.

If you agree to participate, our discussion today will last about 60 to 90 minutes. Throughout our discussion, I will start by introducing a topic and then ask you a few questions related to that topic. For example, I will ask about the types of rules and regulations governing forests in your village, and your use of forest resources. The objective of this group conversation is to gather your opinions and perspectives on the topics we discuss. When answering questions,

you are all encouraged to say whatever you think is appropriate. There are no right or wrong answers, so please feel welcome to express yourself freely.

I will conduct the discussion and _____ will take notes. If you agree to participate, I will also tape record our conversation. Remember that the tape recording is only for the purpose of the research, and it will be kept confidential. Also, we will not use your names in preparing any notes or reports and we will make sure that no one can identify who made specific remarks.

Does anyone have any concerns with the use of the tape recorder? (Determine if there is agreement to use the tape recorder)

Any questions or comments before we get started? (Answer any questions as appropriate)

Okay, let's start by introducing ourselves so we can know each other better. Please describe who you are and any other information you want to share. (Facilitate introductions and then proceed)"

Section 2: Background on Local Forest Use and Conditions

Enumerator: First, I would like to ask some questions about how forests in your area are used.

1. How does your community utilize the forests and forest resources in your area? For example, what are most the important forest products collected for consumption and income purposes?
How would you describe the overall condition of the forests in your area? Can you please explain how the condition of the forests in your area has changed over the past five years? (*PROBE: How and why have conditions improved? How and why have conditions worsened?*)
Do you believe the clearing of forests or the destruction of forest resources are problems facing your community? Please explain.
In your opinion, are there any activities taking place in your area that you feel are contributing to the clearing of forests or the destruction of forest resources?

Section 3: PERFORM

Enumerator: Now let's talk a bit about activities in your area related to protecting your forests.

PERFORM may or may not be referenced specifically in the course of FGDs with communities; instead, the team may choose to reference the relevant implementer and project activities according to the field site.

Enumerator Note: *It is important to use context-specific details of the field site to guide this portion of the focus group discussion. The goal is to elicit enough detail from the respondent to determine the PERFORM-specific activities and outcomes in the area. Be sure to tailor questions specifically to ask about the implementing activities by implementing partners in each area.*

Can you please describe any initiatives in your area related specifically to cutting fewer trees or taking better care of the forests? (*PROBE specifically for PERFORM activities*)

Turning specifically to {the work of X}, can you please tell me about the activities of X taking place in your area?

How did you find out about the PERFORM activity/activities supported by (implementing partner)?

In what way(s) are you personally involved with the PERFORM project? (*PROBE participation in trainings, capacity building on community forest management, agroforestry initiatives/non-timber forest products, etc.*)
Enumerator Note: *Probe on site-specific activities. The answer to this question should be used to tailor the remainder of the FGD.*

Who are the main members in your community involved in the X project activities?

How are women involved in the PERFORM activity in your community? Have there been any specific efforts to include women in your community in the activities of X?

Do you believe that women are able to take part in these project activities in an equal manner as men? Why or why not?

Has the involvement of your community in forest conservation activities changed because of the work completed by X? For example, are there any agriculture, forestry, or other land use activities your community now works with because of the project? *PROBE the list of activities based on site-specific activities.*

Have the activities of X led to any collaborations with members of your community and the private sector or companies? If yes, please describe the nature of these partnerships. Do you feel your community has benefited from these partnerships? If yes, how?

What have the activities of PERFORM taught you about protecting forest resources?

From your perspective, what has been the most important outcome of PERFORM's activities in your community?

Has the work of PERFORM had any negative effects on your community? If yes, please explain.

From what you have observed, what changes could be made to improve the activities of PERFORM in your area?

Section 4: Interview Wrap-up/Conclusion

Do you have any final comments on X that you wish to share at this time?

Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?

Mini-Survey Questionnaire

INFORMED CONSENT

ENUMERATOR: INTRODUCE THE PARTICIPANT TO THE SURVEY AND OBTAIN HIS/HER CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY.

STATEMENT TO BE READ TO THE BENEFICIARY:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. We are a consulting firm based at Lilongwe and we are conducting a survey to learn about forest management and climate change issues due to deforestation, agriculture and land use change activities. You have been selected to participate in the interview, because you participated in one of the activities organized by the **[PARTNER]** during the project implementation period (2014-2019). Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you can choose to stop at any time or skip any question you do not want to answer. Your answers will be completely confidential; we will not share information that identifies you with anyone. After entering the questionnaire into a data base, we will destroy all information such as your name that could link these responses to you.

Do you have any questions? May I begin the interview now?

PARTICIPANT AGREES TO BE INTERVIEWED.....1

→
WITH THE SURVEY

CONTINUE

PARTICIPANT DOES NOT AGREE TO BE INTERVIEWED.....2
INTERVIEW! *"Thank you very much for your time."*

STOP

MODULE A: PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION COVER SHEET

BENEFICIARY IDENTIFICATION		CODE	A08. INTERVIEWER VISITS			
			1	2	3	
A01. DISTRICT		DATE				
A02. EPA						
A03. CLUSTER (GVH)						
A04. VILLAGE						
A05. NAME OF PARTICIPANT						
A06. PARTNER NAME		*RESULT CODES (A08): 1. COMPLETED 2. INCOMPLETE / PARTIALLY COMPLETE 3. REFUSED 4. COULD NOT LOCATE 5. NOT HOME 6. POSTPONED / UNAVAILABLE 7. TOO ILL TO RESPOND/COGNITIVELY IMPAIRED 9. OTHER (SPECIFY)				
A07. GPS COORDINATES						
NOTE: FOR DATA POINTS A01-A06 - PLEASE, REFER TO THE LIST PROVIDED BY PERFORM BEFORE THE SURVEY.						
☐ A09. SEX OF PARTICIPANT	SEX CODES: 1. MALE 2. FEMALE	A11. INTERVIEWER NAME: _____ A12. SUPERVISOR NAME: _____				
A10. AGE OF PARTICIPANT (full years): _____ ENUMERATOR: IF BELOW 18 YEARS OLD STOP INTERVIEW and ask the beneficiary to invite a parent or guardian to secure his/her permission for the beneficiary to take part in the survey. Continue after you get the permission.		A13. NATIVE LANGUAGE OF PARTICIPANT ☐	LANGUAGE CODES: 1. CHICHEWA 2. YAO 3. TUMBUKA 4. LOMWE 5. NGONI 6. SENA 9. OTHER (SPECIFY): _____			

If BELOW 14 YEARS OLD TERMINATE INTERVIEW!		
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MODULE B: PERFORM PROJECT

Enumerator: “First, I would like to ask you a few questions about your awareness of PERFORM Activities

B. I PERFORM Awareness

B1.1 Are you aware of the USAID PERFORM project sites in your area?	Yes 1 No 2
B1.2 Did you participated in any activities implemented by PERFORM or its partners in your area?	Yes 1 No 2
B.1.3 Do you know anything about the details of the work that USAID PERFORM has done in your area?	Yes 1 No 2
B.1.4 What were the key activities that PERFORM introduce/implement in the community	
B1.5 What were the key roles of the community in the PERFORM activity	
B.1.6 Which activities did you take part that were implemented by PERFORM or its partners	(to be coded based on PERFORM key activities implemented at community Level)

B 2. Training Recieved

Enumerator: “Now, I would like to ask you about the trainings that you received under PERFORM initiative

B2.1 Did you receive any training under PERFORM project?	Yes 1 No 2
---	---------------------------

B.2.2 What are the areas that you were trained on?	1. Sustainable land scape 2. Forest management 3. etc
B.2.3 Were the trainings beneficial?	Yes 1 No 2
B.2.4 how beneficial were they	

B3. Livelihood Benefits

Enumerator: “Now, I would like to ask you about the livelihood benefits offered under the project

B3.1 Did you receive any livelihood support/benefits under PERFORM project?	Yes 1 No 2
B3.2 were they monetary or non monetary?	1. Monetary 2. Non- Monetary 3. Both
B3.3 If Monetary, how much did you get?	
B3.4 What were the conditions that were distributed	1. Grant 2. Matching Grant 3. Loan with zero Interest 4. Loan with minimal Interest
B3.5 If Non-Monetary, what were the benetifs	List based on the non monetary assistance provided by PERFORM
B3.6 Have the support achieved meaningful livelihood and income benefits at your household?	Yes 1 No 2 Please Explain

B4. Private Sector Involvement

Enumerator: “Now I would like to ask you about the private sector involvement in the PERFORM intervention

in your community

B4.1 Did any private enterprise introduce deforestation technologies in your community under PERFORM initiative?	Yes 1 No 2
B4.2 Which technologies were brought into your community by the private enterprise?	List them here
B4.3 List the names of the private enterprises that invested in deforestation technologies in your community as a result of PERFORM interventions	
B4.4 Did you purchased any deforestation reduction technologies introduced by the private enterprise?	Yes 1 No 2 Please list them
B4.5 If not, what was the key reason	1. Expensive 2. Not user friendly 3. Not interested 4. Other.....
B4.6 Rate the contribution of the technologies to the reduction of deforestation in your community	1.High reduction of deforestation 2. Medium reduction of deforestation 3. Low reduction of deforestation 4. No reduction of deforestation
B4.7 Has there been any increase of income to members of the community due to private enterprise investment?	Yes 1 No 2 Please Explain

B5. Women and Youth Empowerment

Enumerator: “Now, I would like to ask you questions about women and youth involvement in the PERFORM interventions in your community

B5.1 Were women and youth involved in the PERFORM interventions?	Yes 1 No 2
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B5.2 If Yes, in your community do you know roughly what is the number of men versus women?	
B5.3 Of the participants who earn more money through the work of PERFORM, is there a difference between the money earned by the work that men and women do?	Yes 1 No 2 Explain
B5.4 In your opinion, has PERFORM interventions led to increasing women and youth access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)?	Yes 1 No 2 Please explain

**THANK THE RESPONDENT FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY
END INTERVIEW**