

# Case 11: M A L A W I

## Improved forest management for sustainable livelihoods II (IFMSLP I and II)

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IFMSLP supports the implementation of the National Forest Policy and the Forest Act by supporting the strategies and actions highlighted in the National Forest Programme. This project had two phases of 3 years each. The first IFMSLP Phase I achieved notable success in the areas of organization of rural communities; development of Participatory Forest Management Plans and forest management agreements; improvement of capacities of rural communities to sustainably harvest and sell forest products from customary land and forest reserves. The second phase built on phase I achievements in terms of activity implementation in the 12 Districts of the country.

The major objective of IFMSLP Phase II is to contribute to the reduction of poverty and the conservation of forests in Malawi and the programme purpose is “To improve the livelihoods of forest dependent communities through the participatory management of forests both in forest reserves and on customary land by implementation of the National Forestry Programme”.

Implementing Organization      Department of Forestry  
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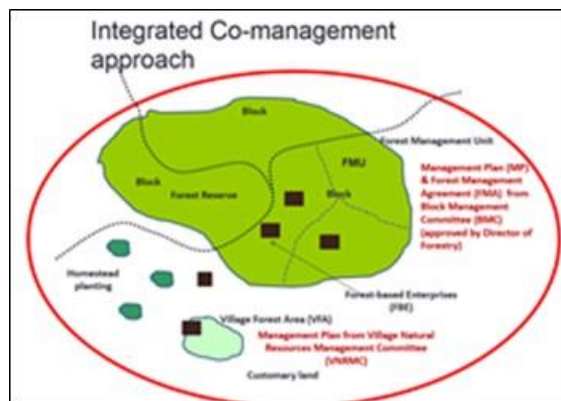
Implementing Period                2006 – 2014

Project site                              12 Districts, Malawi

**Key Words:** Co-management, Improving community Livelihoods, Community Forest, Income Generating Activities, increasing forest cover, Falls within four major categories of Forest Product , Benefits, Benefit sharing and types of forest



Local licensing:  
 Communities allowed to issue local permits under the forest act



Biodiversity: Integrated co-management approach  
 The reserve is divided into Forest Management Units (FMUs) based strategic plan. Blocks are then demarcated based on group village head (GVH) boundaries.

### Background of the Project

The Project was operational in the following 12 Districts of the Country as Chitipa (Mugheze and Wilindi Forest Reserves), Karonga (Vinthukutu and South Karonga Forest Reserves), Rumphi (Uzumara Forest Reserve and Phwezi Valley), Mzimba (Mtangatanga and Perekezi Forest Reserves), Kasungu (Chawa Proposed Forest Reserve), Ntchisi (Ntchisi Forest Reserve), Dedza (Mua-Livulezi), Ntcheu (Dzonzi-Mvai), Machinga (Malosa and Machinga Forest Reserve), Chikhwawa (Masenjere Escarpment) and Nsanje (Matandwe Forest Reserve).

Main underlying drivers of forest loss/degradation in Malawi of which the project were addressing are:

- ✓ High incidence of poverty and food insecurity:
- ✓ Increasing demand for land and forest resources:
- ✓ High dependence on fuel wood as a source of energy for cooking and heating.
- ✓ Institutional weaknesses combined with poor application of the rule of law

### Overall Goal and Objectives of the Project

**Goal:** Contribute to the reduction of poverty and the conservation of forests in Malawi.

**Objective:** Improve the livelihoods of forest dependent communities through the participatory management of forests both in forest reserves and on customary land by implementation of the National Forestry Programme (2001).

### Major Activities

- ✓ Increasing forest cover through natural regeneration and tree planting
- ✓ Assisting forest dependent communities to improve their livelihoods through collaborative management of forests in the reserves and on customary land,
- ✓ Securing and formalizing the access and control of forest resources to meet the basic needs of forest-adjacent population,
- ✓ Helping to develop forest-based income-generating opportunities for these forest-adjacent communities

### Direct outputs from the Project

Involve local communities in decision-making about their surrounding natural resources.

Provides for:

- ✓ More effective local control over forest resources
- ✓ More sustainable land management

### Indirect impact of the Project

Increased and sustained forest cover for the country

- ✓ Contribute to Increased agricultural productivity for the country and hence
- ✓ Contribute to the reduction of poverty and the conservation of forests in Malawi.

### Challenges and limitations of the project

- ✓ Program sometimes suffer from conflict of interest e.g. at political level
- ✓ Illegal activities such as charcoal production, fuelwood vending, encroachment, and poaching still prevalent

**Intervention of Central/Local Government and other stakeholders**

- ✓ Political support
- ✓ Project management by PMU/Secretariat

**Way Forward**

Key areas that require improvements & strategies

- ✓ Effective functioning of local PFM & co-management initiatives
- ✓ Effective functioning of FBEs and other livelihoods activities (Develop and implement simple business plans)
- ✓ Ensure effective functioning of local forest management boards (LFMBs)
- ✓ Enhanced capacity of DOF for regulatory monitoring
- ✓ Effective financing of PFM/co-management activities
- ✓ Improved and enabling policy and legal framework for PFM
- ✓ Improved communication systems

**Reference Documents/Materials**

- ✓ WWW.forestry.gov.mw  
Department of Forestry, P.O Box 30048, Capital City, Lilongwe 3, Malawi
- ✓ IFMSLP report\_2008, Government of Malawi, Department of Forestry
- ✓ Forest Policy\_2016, Government of Malawi, Department of Forestry
- ✓ Malawi National Forestry Programme\_2001, Government of Malawi, Department of Forestry
- ✓ Standards and Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi, Government of Malawi, Department of Forestry
- ✓ Ramjee ST Nyirenda, 2017, Co-management specialist Final Report, Department of Forestry, P.O Box 30048, LL3, Malawi

**Resource Persons**

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Local projects.:  
From benefits of co-management communities can decide to implement projects of their choice



Benefit sharing:  
communities contribute 30% of their income to central government

**Box: Additional Information**

**SOME SUCCESS STORIES**

- ✓ Improved livelihoods in certain community groups through program support to IGAs
- ✓ Improved stakeholder support in law enforcement - by Communities, Police, Judiciary & Media
- ✓ There is improving program ownership by the wider community in impact area

**SOME LESSONS LEARNT**

- ✓ Effective law enforcement is vital for a successful co-management program.
- ✓ The IGA/FBE program running concurrently with the law enforcement synergizes co-management outputs from both initiatives.
- ✓ IGA/FBE improved livelihoods have an indirect positive influence in reducing illegal activities in FRs.
- ✓ Forest rehabilitation through natural regeneration or tree planting assists land and water conservation and promotes dry season farming downstream.