



Malawi: Support to the implementation of social protection for the ultra-poor people

Inclusive and Shock Sensitive Social Protection in Malawi

Background

The Government of Malawi is committed to reducing poverty and vulnerability for its population through social protection. It has therefore set up the Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP) II to guide the implementation of social protection programmes and increase efforts to reduce chronic poverty and vulnerability.

The Challenge

While important achievements have been made since the launch of the MNSSP II, its coordination and implementation remain challenging. With different stakeholders on the Malawian side and different development partners assisting the government, with a variety of approaches and programmes to implement the MNSSP II, there is a risk of a fragmented, project based and disconnected social protection sector. Increasing the performance of institutions working in the sector is thus vital for a functioning social protection sector with a focus on efficient implementation.



Project name	Support to the implementation of social protection for the ultra-poor people in Malawi (Social Protection Programme III, SPP III)
Partner Country	Malawi
Volume	EUR 6,460,000 (5,46 Mio. EUR BMZ, 1 Mio. EUR EU)
Duration	April 2022 to March 2025
Implementing Partner	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

There are various core systems that build a crucial foundation for a coherent social protection sector. One of them is the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR), an integrated beneficiary database that allows to identify beneficiaries in a reliable and efficient way. To date the UBR is being used by various cash-based programmes and is recognised as a progressive social registry in the country.

However, a nationwide roll-out of the UBR is still to be completed. Also, the lack of regular updates is impacting its credibility in the long run. Within the MNSSP II a concept of graduation addresses resilience building and poverty reduction from a broader perspective. It focusses on facilitating access to different and mutually reinforcing measures for the ultra-poor population that enable them to escape poverty through closely available social services. The necessary steps for systematic graduation pathways and guidance have not taken place yet, though.

Our approach

The GIZ Social Protection Programme (SPP) III aims to strengthen performance of the social protection system and its institutions at national and district level. To support the coordination and steering of the implementation of the MNSSP at national and district level as well as supporting an efficient and reliable identification of beneficiaries for the various different social protection services are key objectives.

GIZ is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded by the European Union (EU). SPP is working in close cooperation with the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (PRSP) Division within Malawi's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA). On district level the programme is cooperating with the districts of Nkhotakota, Balaka and Thyolo.

Together with its partners the project is focusing on the following priorities:

- To strengthen the capacities of the government to steer the implementation of social protection and related strategy processes,
- To further strengthen the UBR in its functionality and institutionalisation as well as to pilot the implementation of a decentralised UBR,
- To support social protection programme beneficiaries to have access to complementary measures.

The EU co-financed component of the GIZ SPP focusses on the delivery of social protection measures and how those can be improved. For example, the component looks at how cash transfers can be done in a transparent and less error-prone way. The following districts are targeted under the EU co-financed component: Chikwawa, Mulanje, Mwanza, Nsanje, Zomba, Neno and Mzimba. The main areas of support are:

- Anchoring of the UBR at district level,
- The implementation of e-payment in at least one districts and
- The application of a harmonised Grievance- and Redress Mechanism in four districts.

Apart from these priorities, GIZ SPP III implemented COVID-19 response measures in 2022 in the disaster affected districts of Nsanje, Chikwawa, Phalombe, Mulanje, Balaka, Salima and Mangochi, with funding from the BMZ. The activities were implemented in coordination with the Ministry of Health and included the construction and rehabilitation of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities as well as conducting a COVID-19 awareness raising campaign with targeted theatre performances and community sensitization meetings. In total, approximately 24,000 people from the affected districts now have access to water and/or sanitation and more than 30,000 people were sensitized on COVID-19 and general hygiene.

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