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**Eagles Relief and Development Programme**



**RUO**



**EMMANUEL  
INTERNATIONAL  
MALAWI**



**Centre for Environmental  
Policy and Advocacy**



# ECRP Consortium

## QUARTERLY REPORT

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## ACRONYMS

AA	Action Aid
ADC	Area Development Committees
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AGRICANE	Agricultural Development and Management Consultants
CA	Christian Aid
CADECOM	Catholic Development Commission in Malawi
CARD	Churches Action in Relief and Development
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.
CARLA	Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihood and Agriculture
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CEPA	Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy
CISONECC	Civil Society Network on Climate Change
CU	Concern Universal
DCCMS	Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services
DEC	District Executive Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DISCOVER	Developing Innovative Solutions with Communities to Overcome Vulnerability through Enhanced Resilience - Consortium led by Concern Universal
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAM	Evangelical Association of Malawi
ECRP	Enhancing Community Resilience Programme
EI	Emmanuel International
EWS	Early Warning System
FEDOMA	Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi
GVH	Group Village Head
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership/Principles
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics
LF	Lead Farmers
LTS	Name of the M&E consultancy firm, appointed by DFID
MALEZA	Malawi Enterprise Zone Association
MANGO	Management Accounting for Non-Governmental Organisations
MIS	Management Information System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Agriculture Policy
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan for Action
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistical Office
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
PCANR	Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
PMU	Programme Management Unit
PVA	Participatory Vulnerability Assessment
ROLEC	River of Life Evangelical Church
SCM	Steering Committee Meeting

SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TA	Traditional Authority
TCCC	Technical Committee on Climate Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VA	Village Agent
VDC	Village Development Committees
VSL	Village Savings and Loans
WALA	Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement

## 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This quarterly report is for the period April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and provides a snapshot of key programmatic, financial and administrative achievements made by the ECRP consortium. The report comprises of eight main sections: (i) general introduction; (ii) programme objectives which also provides a summary of the number of direct beneficiaries reached in the reporting period; (iii) summary of progress status in the reporting period which details programmatic achievements arranged according to the programmes 4 key outputs as well as financial and administrative progress; (iv) a snapshot of achievements in relation to the programmes four cross cutting issues; (v) a documentation of constraints and lessons learnt in the reporting period; (vi) management related progress status including capacity building interventions undertaken; (vii) a status of finance and administrative progress including capacity building initiatives and partner risk assessments; and (viii) a summary of key activities planned for the next reporting period.

## 2. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The programme aims at contributing to the attainment of the Hyogo Framework for Action by halving disaster losses and increasing communities' resilience to climate change by 2016 in Malawi. This will enable households to build resilient livelihoods that are sustainable and profitable, incorporating natural resource management and risk reduction, increasing adaptive capacity and enabling vulnerable households to have a voice in decisions affecting them.

**Programme Impact:** Reduction in the existing and future risks caused by natural hazards and climate change and strengthened capacity of vulnerable communities to cope with current risks or adapt to new ones.

**Programme Outcome:** 305,000 people within 7 vulnerable districts in central and southern Malawi have developed their capacity to increase resilience to climatic risk.

### **Key Programme outputs:**

The programme is working to ensure that:

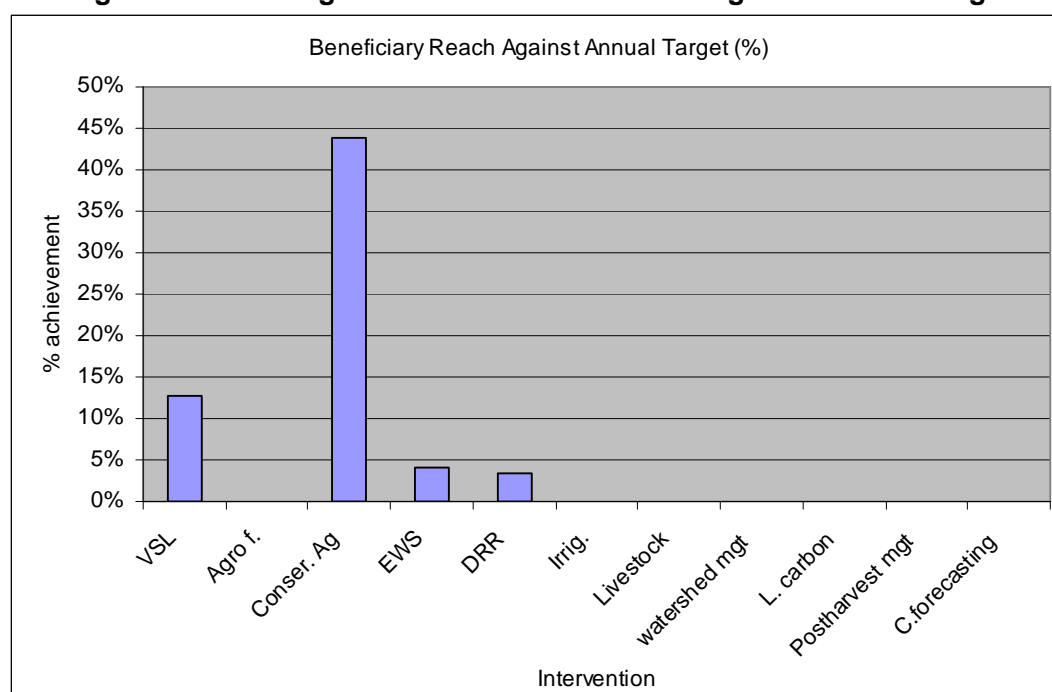
- The capacity of local authorities, communities and individuals to address the impacts of climate change is increased
- The capacity of communities and individuals to adapt their livelihoods to climate variability and the impacts of climate change and to disasters is increased
- Information sharing between stakeholders on DRM and climate change adaptation is strengthened
- The capacity of disaster risk reduction and climate change policy and programmes and delivery structures of key Government Ministries and Departments is strengthened

### **Direct beneficiaries:**

The number of direct beneficiary household planned for the first year of implementation is 30% of the overall programme target of 61,800 households. The number of households reached i.e. enrolled to participate in the various ECRP interventions is as follows against what was planned in the reporting period:

**Table 1: Beneficiary Households Reached by Interventions**

Intervention	Targets by June 2016	Targets for 2012/13 Year	Achievement Q1 of 2012/13	% achievement against annual target
VSL	36,205	12,902	1,648	13%
Agro forestry	23,187	4,929	0	0%
Conservation Agriculture	20,420	6,083	2,664	44%
Early Warning Systems	61,000	12,242	511	4%
DRR	32,982	16,647	578	3%
Small scale Irrigation	7,790	3,839	0	0%
Livestock	4,570	739	0	0%
Watershed Management	5,600	2,843	0	0%
Low carbon Technologies	26,052	7,044	0	0%
Post Harvest Management	34,450	11,196	0	0%
Climate Forecasting	28,752	13,400	0	0%

**Figure 1: Percentage of Beneficiaries Reached Against Annual Target**

The results show significant progress made on VSL and conservation agriculture as they are the entry interventions and their ToTs were prioritize earlier in the quarter for some work to commence on the ground. Other interventions such as DRR, EWS, irrigation and low carbon technologies should take off in the next quarter once partner staff trainings are concluded.

### 3. SUMMARY OF REPORT

**Programmatically**, ECRP concentrated on three key issues during the first quarter: (i) provision of training of trainers (ToT) to consortium members and their implementing partners' staff in almost all programme interventions; (ii) community and local government authorities' sensitization about the programme; (iii) and setting up planning, monitoring and reporting systems. Implementing partners' staff were trained in advocacy, conservation agriculture, village savings and loans (VSL), post harvest management and storage, and mainstreaming of disability. All partners have done sensitizations meetings at District level (with the District Executive Committee (DEC)) and at community levels (first with Area Development Committees (ADCs) and then Village Development Committees (VDCs)) in all of the 26 Traditional Authority (TA) areas. The sensitizations aimed to brief participants about the ECRP programme and initiate the process of identification of beneficiaries. The Programme Management Unit (PMU) led the finalization of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for programme interventions including development of data collection and reporting tools; preparation for the baseline survey including development of tools, recruiting and training of research assistants; and the development of the ECRP Management Information System (MIS) with LTS. Details of achievements made against activities that were planned in the reporting period are presented in Table 2 below.

**Administratively**, the PMU successfully recruited the remaining positions in this reporting period (Senior Finance and Administration Manager in May 2012 and the Climate Smart Agricultural Coordinator in June 2012). Consortium members and their partners also finalized recruitment of all positions, and have had no turnover with the exception of Action Aid which had to let go of the District Coordinator (Nsanje). The PMU also finalized contracts and/or MOUs with technical support partners such as ICRISAT, MANGO, AGRICANE, CEPA and DCCMS. These partners were in the forefront facilitating ToTs mentioned above. It needs to be noted that the contract from DFID to Christian Aid included a new clause, which caused significant delays in signing the contracts between Christian Aid and CARE and Action Aid respectively. This delay (due to the importance of the extra clause) then in turn caused delays in signing contracts between consortium members and their implementing NGO partners. Some contracts were only signed end May, and this subsequently caused issues with cash-flow for some partners (RUO, Mothercare, ROLEC, ADRA, CADECOM, EI, Heifer and MALEZA). This has also influenced the work on in the field for a number of the partners. Two vehicles for partners were also severely delayed due to logistics issues at the car-dealer side. This influenced those partners in their mobility during this quarter.

**Financially**, inflation resulting from local currency official devaluation (49%) had a significant impact on the programmes' finances. Although the devaluation alone might have resulted in more cash available, this was partially eroded by costs that sharply escalated immediately afterwards. In addition, delays in concluding some partner contracts also affected level of implementation by partners on the ground since processing of their grants was dependent on the contracts. As such a better part of the quarter was not fully utilized for programme activities. Following recent visit by MANGO in May 2012, several recommendations have been followed up to close up the risk gaps identified. Prior to this MANGO had undertaken a risk assessment of each partner to have an in-depth understanding of these risks. MANGO conducted trainings afterwards for both finance and programme people, who later on came up with action plans of how to further improve the processes and procedures in place at their organisations. Late June 2012, Action Aid informed the PMU of a possible fraud case involving a partner and Action Aid staff. Action Aid took the necessary measures to limit damage and manage the risk. DFID was

informed about it as soon as it was made known. Action Aid had not yet made a detailed report of the incident as internal investigations are still underway. However, one of their partners who were involved in the matter has since been suspended pending outcome of the investigations. Findings and decisions made will be documented and shared as soon as possible with DFID.

**Table 2: Summary of Main Achievements by Programme Outputs**

Activity Number	Activity / sub activities	Target for the quarter	Actual Achievement during the quarter	Explanation of variance and gender disaggregated data where possible
<b>Output 1: Increased capacity of local authorities, communities and individuals to address the impacts of climate change</b>				
1.1	Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation			
	Training District level DRR and Climate Change Committees	1 training session	1 training session	In Thyolo, CARD had a training that was attended by 67 participants (52 males, 15 females)
1.2	Early warning system			
	Community sensitization meetings	342 people	511 people	In Nsanje, Action Aid conducted some sensitization meetings on DRR and intervention on early warning systems
<b>Output 2: Community and household livelihood practices are better adapted to the impacts of climate variability and change</b>				
2.1	Conservation Agriculture			
	Training of trainers workshop for implementing partners	1 session	1 session	ToT was facilitated by the Technical Lead for conservation agriculture with support from the Government's Land Resources Centre, and was attended by 40 partners staff and 36 Government front line staff from ECRP districts
	Community sensitization and mobilization meetings in selected GVH	1,317 participants	3,069 participants	Sensitizations started at DEC and then to ADCs and VDCs. Farmers were enthusiastic about the combination of conservation agriculture and VSL hence large numbers than expected.
	Identification of lead farmers (LF)	83 LFs	59 LFs	Though the identification process has just started, some partners were able to register LFs such as EAM in Chikwawa and CARD in Mulanje and Thyolo. These LFs will be trained in the upcoming quarter and will take up the role of training fellow farmers
	Training of lead farmers	26 LFs	31 LFs	EAM in Chikwawa was able to train their 31 identified LFs. Other partners plan to start training next quarter



Activity Number	Activity / sub activities	Target for the quarter	Actual Achievement during the quarter	Explanation of variance and gender disaggregated data where possible
2.3	Small Scale Irrigation			
	Conducting feasibility studies and environmental impact assessments for the potential irrigation sites	0	9 sites	CARD was able to do preliminary assessments for 2 sites in Thyolo while EAM and Eagles did 7 preliminary assessments in Chikwawa. The full feasibility studies will be conducted with Agricane after the ToT next quarter. These preliminary ones were done due to demand from communities.
2.6	Village Savings and Loans			
	Training of trainers workshop for partners	1 session	1 session	ToT was facilitated by the Technical Lead for VSL and attended by 37 partner field staff
	Establishment of VSL Groups	67 groups	52 groups	After the ToT, partners started forming VSL groups and Emmanuel International, EAM, RUO, Mothercare and ROLEC established 52 groups comprising of 879 individuals (232 males and 647 females)
	Identification and training of Village Agents (VA)	60	0	The process of identifying village agents has just started and should be completed in Quarter 2. After the identification, the VAs will undergo training
	Training of VSL groups	0	7	7 VSL groups have undergone training in 2 of the 7 modules of VSL in Chikwawa. Trainings for the rest of partners to start next quarter
<b>Output 3: Strengthened information sharing by different stakeholders on DRM and climate change adaptation. (including district and national level governments, research institutions and CSOs)</b>				
3.1	Capacity building and engagement with media practitioners			
	Develop and maintain roster of media practitioners engaged in CCA and DRR	1 roster	1 roster	A total of 23 (11 male and 12 female) media practitioners have been enlisted on the roster and maintained by CEPA
	Facilitate media and community interaction on CCA and DRM practices	1 session	1 session	The session took place in Kasungu with facilitation from CEPA. Twelve (12) media practitioners (5 males and 7 females) attended.
3.2	Knowledge and information sharing with national and district level institutions on climate change			
	Participate in	1 meeting	1 CISON ECC	During the meeting, CEPA shared

Activity Number	Activity / sub activities	Target for the quarter	Actual Achievement during the quarter	Explanation of variance and gender disaggregated data where possible
	CISONECC meetings and other relevant climate change national level forums (TCCC, CA task force)		meeting	the work that ECRP is carrying out focusing more on the advocacy initiatives for the programme.
	Update CEPA website with materials on ECRP	3 updates	None, but in progress	Over 12 updates were in preparation stage at the time of reporting. These will be uploaded onto CEPA's website in the next quarter.
<b>Output 4: Strengthened disaster risk reduction and climate change programmes and delivery structures of key Government Ministries and Departments</b>				
4.1	Capacity building of local structures			
	Hold meeting to share climate change advocacy strategy with implementing partners and map out how advocacy issues will be integrated in partners plans	1 meeting	1 meeting done	The meeting facilitated by CEPA, was attended by 46 participants (29 males and 17 females) from ECRP and 15 participants (9 males and 7 females) from DISCOVER
	Facilitate training of implementing partners, selected civil society organizations and district level government personnel in policy and related issues	1 training session	1 training session done	The training was facilitated by CEPA and attended by 66 participants (ECRP: 34 males and 7 females; DISCOVER: 15 males and 10 females)
4.2	Development and dissemination of policy beliefs on climate change related issues			
	Develop & disseminate policy brief on major policy concerns on community resilience in Malawi	One policy brief	One policy brief	The policy brief identified draft national disaster risk management policy and proposed national climate change policy as the two policies requiring immediate focus by ECRP/DISCOVER
4.4	Advocacy on significant profile and priority for conservation agriculture in the draft National Agriculture Policy			
	Conduct consultations to establish the status of National Agricultural Policy (NAP)	1 consultation meeting	1 consultation meeting done	The consultation meeting was done with the secretariat for the National Conservation Agriculture Taskforce. It was found out that the draft National Agriculture Policy was withdrawn for reformulation

Activity Number	Activity / sub activities	Target for the quarter	Actual Achievement during the quarter	Explanation of variance and gender disaggregated data where possible
				following CSOs concerns that it lacked CSOs input. CEPA will be making follow-ups on this in the coming quarters.
	Engage conservation agriculture stakeholders to develop a policy position for the draft National Agriculture Policy (NAP)	1 meeting	None	This activity was not done due to the withdrawal of the NAP as mentioned above. However, this is being taken as an opportunity for the programme, through CEPA, to reposition itself properly while waiting for the re-introduction of the draft NAP.
	Lobby Minister of agriculture and the Technical Secretariat in the MoAFS for increased focus on conservation agriculture in the NAP	1 meeting	None	This withdraw of the draft NAP has meant that CEPA has had to change advocacy focus on conservation agriculture. During the next quarters, more lobbying work will be on raising the profile of conservation agriculture so that it gets attention as the NAP is being redrafted. Among others, CEPA will be participating in the National Agriculture Fair and Conservation Agriculture symposium scheduled for the next quarter.
4.5	Advocacy for increased national budgetary allocations for climate change and DRM from 0.9% to at least 2%			
	Conduct Budget Analysis on conservation agriculture, localized renewable energy provision, climate change and DRM	1 analysis	1 budget analysis exercise done	The budget analysis showed that allocation for climate change sectors is still around 1% of the national budget. The budget allocation for DoDMA is still under the OPC as opposed to a separate vote.
	Lobby meetings with PCANR, Parliamentary committee on Budget and Finance, treasury, OPC, MoAFS, Dept of Land Resources and members of parliament from disaster prone areas	1 meeting	2 lobby meetings have been done	The issues from the budget analysis (as indicated above) were shared with the members of parliament. They indicated the analysis was an eye opener to them and promised to propose increased budget allocation for climate change sectors. Additionally, the MPs indicated they did not know that the lack of a

Activity Number	Activity / sub activities	Target for the quarter	Actual Achievement during the quarter	Explanation of variance and gender disaggregated data where possible
				separate budget for DoDMA does affect effective response rate to disasters. They also promised to move motions in parliament for a separate budget vote for DoDMA. The meeting was attended by 51 participants comprising of senior government officials and Members of Parliament (41 males and 10 females). The targeted members of parliament were from areas targeted by ECRP and DISCOVER.
4.6	Advocacy for an enhanced coherence between CCA and DRM policy and implementation			
	Engage UNDP, DFID, Irish Aid, Norway Foreign Affairs to lobby for clear mandates and responsibilities	1 meeting	None	The intention to engage these institutions was first shared with the National Technical Committee on Climate Change. This committee advised CEPA to hold on in engaging these institutions as there was directive suggesting that issues related to institutional mandates on climate change should not be discussed anymore until National Climate Change Policy development process starts. CEPA will continue to pursue this issue in the next quarter.
	Lobby OPC and Ministry of Development and planning, technical committees to clarify mandate of the key departments for CCA management and DRM (through the technical Committee)	1 meeting	None	Not done due to the same reason as explained above. This to be pursued further in the next quarter.
	Prepare and publish position paper for National Climate Change Policy	1 paper	1 position paper has been prepared	Among others, the position paper has identified governance & coordination and financing of climate change issues as a priority issue to be addressed by the yet to be developed National climate Change Policy.

Activity Number	Activity / sub activities	Target for the quarter	Actual Achievement during the quarter	Explanation of variance and gender disaggregated data where possible
Monitoring, Learning and Coordination				
5.1	Community Based M&E			
	Conduct baseline survey	One baseline survey in 7 districts	First phase of the baseline survey (focusing on household level indicators) has been done in 7 districts	The survey was successfully done but it took more time and financial resources than originally planned due to change of methodology as recommended by LTS. LTS recommended to focus the survey on NSO demarcated enumeration areas as opposed to just ECRP targeted GVHs. During the next quarter (in July), the programme will be collecting baseline data on district and communitywide indicators.
	Develop a database system (MIS)	One database system	a draft database system is in place	This has been developed with support from LTS, but after initial feedback from consortium, LTS is further finalizing the database

### **Output 1 - Capacity of local authorities, communities and individuals to address the impacts of climate change increased**

Output 1 relates to interventions on disaster risk reduction including contingency planning, climate change adaptation and early warning systems. ECRP will implement this with support from the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services. Hence, ECRP focused on cementing the MOU with the DCCMS from the inception period. A work plan was developed stipulating what DCCMS will provide to ECRP partners to build their capacity to roll out DRR and CCA activities in their communities. A training of trainers' workshop is part of that plan and is scheduled for early July to cover aspects such as familiarizing partner staff with concepts and methods of Disaster Risk Management, the concept of vulnerability, and the key concepts of contingency planning and seasonal forecasting for farmers. The consortium members and their partners were, on the other hand, focused on community sensitization around DRR and contingency planning.

### **Output 2 - Capacity of communities and individuals to adapt their livelihoods to climate variability and the impacts of climate change and to disasters increased**

Output 2 relates to livelihood interventions, and as many as they are, ECRP partners were able to do some work on two interventions in the reporting period namely conservation agriculture and VSL. This is because a lot of the time was spent on sensitizing and stimulating interest from community members on the various interventions from ECRP. The other reason is because VSL and conservation agriculture are the entry interventions for ECRP. Consequently, partners field

staff were trained in conservation agriculture with support the Government's Land Resources Centre. After the training, partners commenced the process of identifying lead farmers<sup>1</sup>, and while the process is still underway, EAM and CARD were able to registers some 59 lead farmers of whom 31 were trained. Another training done for partner field staff was on VSL, and subsequently partner commenced formation and registration of groups which will continue to the next quarter. So far 52 groups have been registered with 879 community members from EI, EAM, RUO, Mothercare and ROLEC. Partners also started the process of identifying Village Agents who are community volunteers who are trained to train and work with VSL groups that register at GVH level.

ECRP plans to conclude on training for all other interventions in the next quarter. One of the contributing factors to this is that the partners have limited staff on the ground which is responsible for rolling out all the livelihoods interventions, hence, the trainings are scheduled such that these officers would have time to implement and attend trainings so it minimizes interference with their field work. Trainings are also split between central region and south region, to give participants ample opportunity to have personal interactions with the trainers.

### **Output 3 - Information sharing between stakeholders on DRM and climate change adaptation strengthened**

Output 3 relates to sharing of information from ECRP, and is championed by CEPA at national level and ECRP partners at district and community levels. Activities under the output are led by the Advocacy strategy that CEPA, ECRP and DISCOVER developed (see Output 4). In the reporting period, ECRP through CEPA was able to put together a roster of media practitioners involved in climate change as an avenue for sharing information about the programme to influence policy and share best practices. Other forums used were meetings with CISONICC, TCCC and preparation of ECRP materials that would eventually be included on CEPA's website ([www.cepa.org](http://www.cepa.org)).

### **Output 4 - Strengthened disaster risk reduction and climate change policy and programmes and delivery structures of key Government Ministries and Departments**

Significant progress has been made on Output 4 during the reporting period including training of partners' staff on advocacy, and rolling out of the advocacy strategy, and partners eventually developing their district advocacy plans. CEPA also undertook an analysis exercise for the National Budget for the year 2012/2013. The analysis focused on allocation of the budget on climate change related sectors, and the results were used to lobby members of parliament for an increased allocation in climate change related sectors. ECRP through CEPA had consultations with MoAFS on integration of conservation agriculture in the National Agriculture Policy (NAP). Findings showed that the draft NAP has been withdrawn for reformulation, and the withdrawal is being taken as opportunity for the programme to lobby for increased integration of conservation agriculture in the policy. CEPA also developed a position paper on National Climate Change policy whose key objective is to provide areas of focus for national climate change policy. The key area identified and that CEPA and ECRP will focus on is enhancing coordination and governance of climate change issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Lead Farmers are community members who volunteer and are registered to be model farmers to train and work with other farmers within their communities

## **4. MAINSTREAMING OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

ECRP has four cross cutting themes: gender; HIV/AIDS; disability; and transparency & accountability based on the Humanitarian Accountability Principles (HAP). The key activity was the design of mainstreaming strategies and activities for the cross cutting issues which have been made part of the SOPs. The ECRP Technical Working Group (TWG) also defined indicators in the performance tracking table that will be used to report on progress made on the mainstreaming of cross cutting issues. The indicators also ensure that the targeting criteria for the various interventions include aspects that address the cross cutting issues. The outstanding activity is to ensure inclusion of data collection sections in the sector data collection tools which will be developed next quarter.

### **4.1. Gender**

As part of the community sensitization activities, implementing partners undertook gender sensitizations deliberately aimed at encouraging and stimulating interest from both men and women for the interventions. Traditional leaders and local leaders (VDCs and ADCs) were especially encouraged as conduits to ensure equal participation of men and women in the programme not only in programme interventions but also in leadership roles for the various groups to be formed e.g. VSL and irrigation groups.

### **4.2. HIV and AIDS**

During sensitization meetings, partners shed light on HIV and AIDS issues and communities were encouraged to participate in various interventions they are interested in. Communities were informed about the targeting criteria for the programme which include households infected and affected with HIV/AIDS; for example households hosting the chronically ill, orphans and vulnerable children, widows and child headed households.

### **4.3. Disability**

ECRP engaged FEDOMA to undertake disability training for implementing partners, as it was found that unlike other cross cutting issues, disability was a completely new area for all partners. During the sensitization meetings, communities, village heads, VDCs and other community structure- members have been encouraged to be as disability-inclusive as possible in identifying participants for various interventions. Community sensitizations emphasized the importance of including people with disabilities in decision making structures for program activities and ensuring that there is a positive attitude toward the disabled in the communities. For partner staff, they were urged to ensure reasonable participation or volunteerism of persons with disabilities in at least two ECRP interventions.

### **4.4. Transparency and Accountability**

One of the values of ECRP is “transparency and accountability”, and activities planned for next quarter include training on HAP, establishment of formal mechanisms for reporting and handling complaints related to the program within programme communities.



## 5. LESSONS AND CONSTRAINTS

### 5.1 Major lessons learnt

Table 3 below provides a summary of some important lessons that have so far been learnt in the reporting period arranged according to several themes from technical, management, partnership to community engagement.

**Table 3: Major Lessons Learnt**

<b>5.1.1 Technical (planning through implementation) lessons learnt</b>
-Development and roll out of SOPs for the programme interventions has improved partner understanding of the various programme interventions and necessary planning at community level. Partners were able to re-plan better after the roll out session in April 2012 when the SOPs were finalized. PMU guidance is a requisite for better activity and financial planning. The Partner Coordination meetings that are planned quarterly are of high necessity to ensure all implementing partners receive the same information and all have ownership on decisions made. Although costs for these meetings are considerable, the value in terms of quality assurance and ownership for the field-officers is significant.
<b>5.1.2 Technical support provision (from PMU or technical Leads and technical partners) lessons learnt</b>
-Joint planning and coordination for technical support to partners eases work load for both partners and technical leads/partners and should be encouraged considering the complexity of the programme and number of technical areas required to be covered. The programme has already seen clashing of programs involving same people at a given time; this clearly demonstrates the need for joint planning and coordination. Hence, the need for a strong coordination from PMU, close working relations (as is currently happening) with the consortium partners and the need to regularly hold partner coordination meetings.
<b>5.1.3 Logistical &amp; administration lessons learnt</b>
-Much as central procurement provides advantages like value for money, it has to be appreciated that it has the potential of leading to delays in procurement which in turn affect implementation of activities. Activities have been heavily affected due to absence of resources for mobility - motorcycles (managed by DISCOVER) were delivered very late to the partners due to various reasons and some vehicles are yet to be delivered (due to delivery issues from the car-suppliers).
<b>5.1.4 Management lessons learnt</b>
As this is a complex consortium with many different interventions, efficient management of the various interventions and partners (implementing and technical) is mandatory. ECRP also wants to maintain a transparent process in decision making, to increase the opportunities for partners and members to get involved in decision making. The reporting templates are made as concise and efficient as possible to ensure all partners report on the same items in the same way. An important lesson throughout the process is the need for capacity building with a number of our implementing partners. Identifying targets, planning activities in line with budget forecast is new to a number of our partners. However, it is satisfactory to notice how quickly these skills are learnt and brought into practice.
<b>5.1.5 Financial lessons learnt</b>
-The process of renewing contracts with partners if delayed, affects disbursement of funds which in turn affects progress of activities on the ground. Consortium members and the PMU need to commence this process much earlier as the year draws to an end. -The 10% clause of under spent versus forecast from DFID, has prompted a much more rigorous financing monitoring system to be in place for ECRP. Monthly expenditure reports are kept internally to keep track of progress such that mitigation actions can be taken where necessary. PMU developed a



management dashboard which presents the main financial indicators for the consortium, supporting decision making. Continuous monitoring of finance practices is ongoing by members and PMU.

#### 5.1.6 Learning/information sharing lessons learnt

-Technical leads and partners need to share TOT materials before the end of the trainings to the participants and not after. Delays in information or material sharing have had implications on scheduling of roll out of activities on the ground. For instance, lead farmers training in conservation agriculture and post harvest management had to be rescheduled due to delay in distribution of training materials.

#### 5.1.7 Partnership lessons learnt

-ECRP's strength is that many organizations collaborate towards a common goal; as mentioned above, it is key that all organizations follow guidelines as presented in SOP's etc. Hence, the need for regular partner coordination meetings to ensure that all partners are duly informed of the guidelines.

#### 5.1.8 Government and other stakeholders cooperation lessons learnt

-Implementation of some activities depends on government processes. Therefore, coordination with stakeholders (e.g. government) and their involvement not only assures their support but also lays good foundation for the sustainability of ECRP activities. The collaboration also creates a platform for sharing best practices and information e.g. the exercise of lead farmer's identification is progressing very well due to the involvement of MoAFS' Agriculture Extension Development Officers.

-Joint planning sessions (coordination meetings) with other similar programmes and NGOs have been essential for ECRP partners in Nsanje where they share impacts areas with the WALA<sup>2</sup> programme. This has necessitated lesson learning, experience sharing and avoidance of targeting the same households.

#### 5.1.9 Community engagement/participation lessons learnt

-Community sensitization was given ample time and communities are showing tremendous eager to participating because they are well informed.

-Linking the sensitization sessions to the PVCA undertaken at the beginning of the programme (inception period) creates a sense of ownership and involvement by communities in the programme. This may very well prove to be key to the sustainability of the programme

#### 5.1.10 Other lessons learnt

## 5.2 Major constraints and actions taken

A number of challenges were experienced in the reporting period ranging from slow start up on activities due to delayed delivery of resources like vehicles and motorbikes, and delayed disbursement of funds to partners because of contractual issues. Table 4 below details the challenges and remedial actions that were undertaken:

**Table 4: Main Challenges encountered**

Constraint/challenges	Actions taken/to be taken
<b>5.2.1. Technical related constraints</b>	
Demand and timing of activities – due to having many activities and limited staff in the field e.g. TOTs meant staff out from their stations and that adversely impacted on timely submission of	-Improving on communication and planning of activities amongst implementing partners and the PMU mainly to minimize on activities coinciding -The Head of Programme at PMU and consortium

<sup>2</sup> WALA is a 5 year USAID food security programme being implemented by a consortium led by Catholic Relief Services

reports	member Programme Managers to coordinate planning and communication -Operations manual developed that addresses communication protocols within the consortium
It has not been possible for CEPA to engage UNDP, DFID, Irish Aid, Norway Embassy on issues related to coordination of climate change issues following advice from the National Technical Committee on Climate Change.	CEPA to pursue this issue during the next quarter. It is expected that development of National Climate Change Policy will start during the next quarter and CEPA will take advantage of this.
Delay in the procurement and provision of motorbikes has affected start up of activities such community sensitization and targeting	-Some partners used old bikes to ease mobility problems such as CARD and EAM -PMU finalized delivery of 30 motorbikes within the reporting period (under DISCOVER) –PMU to prioritize delivery of all programme vehicles in the next quarter
The change of baseline survey methodology meant that it required more time and resources than originally planned.	Programme used research assistants to carry out additional workload presented by the change of baseline survey methodology.
<b>5.2.2. Management related constraints</b>	
Due to delay in signing of contracts with partners (due to DFID change in contract, which consequently changed contracts with members and hence partners), some consortium members were unable to timely transfer funds for activities	-Some partners had to use own funds to pay staff and where possible to start least cost activities like community sensitization -Contracts with partners expedited and now all finalized
<b>5.2.3 Others</b>	
In Nsanje and partly in Thyolo and Mulanje there is the WALA programme which is implementing activities similar to those of ECRP in the same TAs. Similarly, there is also a geographical overlap with Government's CARLA <sup>3</sup> project in Nsanje. This poses a potential problem of same household being targeted by both programmes for the same interventions.	A detailed assessment to be done in the next quarter to determine the extent of geographical overlap. Additionally, a meeting between the District Commissioner, WALA and Action Aid has been arranged and will take place next quarter to iron out and have an agreement.

## 6. MANAGEMENT

In the reporting period, ECRP consortium concentrated on capacity building efforts for implementing partners' staff on the various interventions. Trainings were conducted on advocacy, conservation agriculture, VSL, post harvest management, and financial management (Table 5).

<sup>3</sup> CARLA is an Africa Development Bank funded Malawi Government programme aimed at improving agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods through communities' resilience to current and future climate variability in 3 of 6 NAPA districts in Malawi. It was launched in May 2012 and will be executed by Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources (Environmental Affairs Department)

**Table 5: Consortium Members staff trained**

Training of Trainers (ToTs)	Number of Participants				Total
	Action Aid	CARE	Christian Aid	Government	
Advocacy	11	20	10	0	41
Conservation Agriculture	11	21	12	36	80
VSL	9	19	10	0	38
Post Harvest Management	7	21	4	25	57
Financial Management	3	9	4	1*	17

\* From CEPA

Some of the training sessions deliberately involved Government staff as a way of ensuring cooperation, collaboration and eventual sustainability of ECRP interventions. Government staff mainly included field based staff MoAFS such as Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AEDOs). Roll out of trainings to communities will hence include the trained Government staff. Other programming activities undertaken are roll out of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for conservation agriculture, agro forestry, post harvest management, DRR, livestock, small scale irrigation, low carbon development, and VSL. ECRP also developed targeting guidelines that spell out uniform procedures and principles for targeting and registering participants in ECRP.

Contracts for technical partners were also finalized. CARE finalized and signed the contract with ICRISAT which provides support on post harvest storage and management. Christian Aid on the other hand finalized and signed the contracts with CEPA and MANGO for advocacy and financial management support. Christian Aid also entered into a memorandum of understanding with DCCMS for the support they will provide to implementing partners on weather forecasting and down scaling the forecasts for farmers. Two contracts that were not finalized were for AGRICANE and ToughStuff. For AGRICANE, the SCM is to deliberate and provide guidance on whether the contract should be with Action Aid or Christian Aid. This is in an effort to ensure efficiency as current set up is that Action Aid contract with the PMU providing managerial oversight. The ToughStuff contract is not supposed to start until October 2012. ECRP planned to have a pilot<sup>4</sup> for solar energy products in the first six months of that contract, and consequently for due diligence ECRP undertook an assessment of the pilot partners (RUO, ROLEC and Mothercare in Nsanje) in the reporting period. The assessment meant to assess the quality of existing VSL groups belonging to the pilot partners in readiness for the pilot and focused on group cohesiveness, age of the group, financial performance, background information, and capacity for accessing the solar products. Overall results from the assessment were that all 6 groups assessed are doing VSL but not in any way resembling the model being promoted by ECRP. In addition, it was discovered that the groups were not formed by the pilot partners but either FINCA<sup>5</sup> or the WALA programme. In conclusion, the assessment showed that though the groups had potential to work with solar products, the purpose of the pilot was for ECRP to draw lessons which could be used for scale-up, and these groups just cannot give us true lessons because they were not formed as VS&L groups and are not practicing the methodology as per our strategy. Therefore, it was resolved that the pilot could not go on. ECRP is looking at the option of instead doing an awareness programme for solar energy products aimed at creating knowledge and stimulating interest for solar products as alternative energy source and their benefits. The programme would also set foundation for addressing

<sup>4</sup> ToughStuff has never run its programmes with their solar products along side interventions such as VSL which is the strategy for ECRP. The Pilot was meant to provide learning for this strategy before fully roll out in April 2013.

<sup>5</sup> FINCA is a micro finance institution registered in Malawi whose primary product is small loans

accessibility issues within the impact areas. This activity will be explored more in the next quarter.

The PMU facilitated procurement and delivery of equipment to partners including vehicles, motorbikes and computers. Table 5 and 6 below gives procurement and distribution status for the equipment by consortium members:

**Table 5: Procurement and Distribution Status Report for vehicles by Consortium Members**

Description	Current location or User
<b>Motor Vehicles</b>	
Nissan Tiida Sedan	Being Cleared - MRA bonded Warehouse
Toyota Hilux	Christian Aid
Toyota Hilux	Christian Aid
Toyota Hilux	CARE Malawi
Toyota Hilux	CARE Malawi
Toyota Hilux	Action Aid Malawi
Toyota Hilux	Christian Aid
Nissan Hardbody x38	Being Cleared - MRA bonded Warehouse
Nissan Hardbody x38	Being Cleared - MRA bonded Warehouse

**Table 6: Procurement and Distribution Status Report for Motor Bikes and others by Consortium Members**

Equipment	Christian Aid	CARE	Action Aid	Total
Yamaha DT125	14	13	3	30
Laptops	3	4	3	10
Desktops with UPS	7	5	2	14
Printers	3	4	0	7
Digital Cameras	2	3	1	6
LCD Projector	1	1	1	3
Printer and Copier	0	1	2	3

## 7. UPDATED RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Partners and the PMU continued to assess their environments for potential risks to the achievement of results and effective delivery of the programme. Where such risks were identified, mitigation measures were proposed and implemented. Some of the risks in the reporting period are in Table 6 below:

**Table 7: Potential Risks to Programme Delivery and Mitigation Measures**

Risks identified	Implementing partner affected	Mitigation measures proposed
Delays in implementation of activities due to delayed contracting, funding, procurement, etc.	All	Improved planning, more attention to implementation endeavour to cover part of 'lost' activities, and clear communication with DFID in terms of expectations in Quarter 2
Related to the point above, under spending by more than 10% variance versus forecast	All	Continuous monitoring PMU has developed an operations manual to identify actions that can be taken to sanction underperforming partners/consortium members
Kwacha devalued by almost 45% in May. The consequence of which is more Kwachas in budget. However, while official inflation figures have not yet jumped to the same level of devaluation, the programme has experienced significant increases in costs of goods and services.	All	Ongoing monitoring of inflation and prices of key goods. Regular review of budget. New budget year also provides the opportunity to re-budget and make new work plans, incorporating any rising costs etc.
Declining energy and commitment among consortium members due to delay in signing of contracts with implementing partners	Most implementing partners were affected with this.	Timely disbursement of funds in the upcoming quarters.
Recent MVAC and FEWSNET report in June predicts a lot of people will be food insecure from as early as August 2012 reaching a peak of about 1.6 Million by January 2013. The affected areas include ECRP impact areas and this may affect delivery of programme activities and ECRP will need to show support to deliver humanitarian aid.	All	Whilst contingency funds have not been factored into this programme, all consortium partners have the capacity to mobilise extra funds for such emergency interventions. DFID has also asked ECRP to give feedback on its partners' experience on cash transfers during the 'hunger-period' expected. For now, the plan is mainly about 'having finger on the pulse' in the affected districts and support in indentifying beneficiaries
Disputes between village headmen and their subjects in some few areas in Chikwawa.	Eagles and EAM	The project prioritized other areas where communities have shown willingness and cooperating. EAM

Sensitization meetings actually failed to take place due to the disputes		involved the TA and the District Commissioner's office to aide with the said villages
Fraud case	Mothercare and Action Aid	Following whistle blow, Action shared the case with PMU and instituted internal investigations. Report is expected in the next quarter. DfID has also been kept abreast of the matter.
Following the change of methodology for the baseline survey, it included villages that will not be directly targeted by ECRP. Whilst clarifications were made on the objective of the survey, there are still expectations that have been raised in those communities.	All partners	Partners will continue making clarifications on the objective of the baseline survey but also highlighting that other communities will benefit indirectly.

## 8. MAIN ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

The reporting period concentrated on sensitizations and getting communities ready to participate in ECRP interventions as well as training partner staff, and as such some activities were not undertaken and are earmarked for the next quarter. Below is a list of activities for the next quarter; for details refer to the consolidated plan attached:

- (i) Finalization of ToTs – trainings for partners on small scale irrigation, agro forestry and seed systems, DRR and farmer seasonal forecasting.
- (ii) Identification of potential irrigation sites and undertake feasibility studies and designs for the sites for approval
- (iii) Review and re-planning for next Year – due to the change of the program year from April to March to October-September, the PMU will facilitate a process of review and planning for consortium members and partners that also takes into consideration the baseline results.
- (iv) Beneficiary registration will continue and be focus to input into the ECRP MIS
- (v) Rolling out of trainings to communities – since most of the ToTs are done, partners will concentrate on training communities and targeted groups. Emphasis will be placed on conservation agriculture, DRR and forecasting, and irrigation as the rainy season approaches.
- (vi) Data analysis and preparation of the baseline survey report including updating the logframe with baseline values. Prior to this, the programme will in July carry out a second phase baseline data collection that will focus on district and communitywide indicators.
- (vii) Finalization of ECRP database system (MIS) and subsequent roll out for use
- (viii) Finalization of data collection tools for ECRP interventions
- (ix) Detailed assessment of geographical overlap between ECRP, WALA and CARLA.

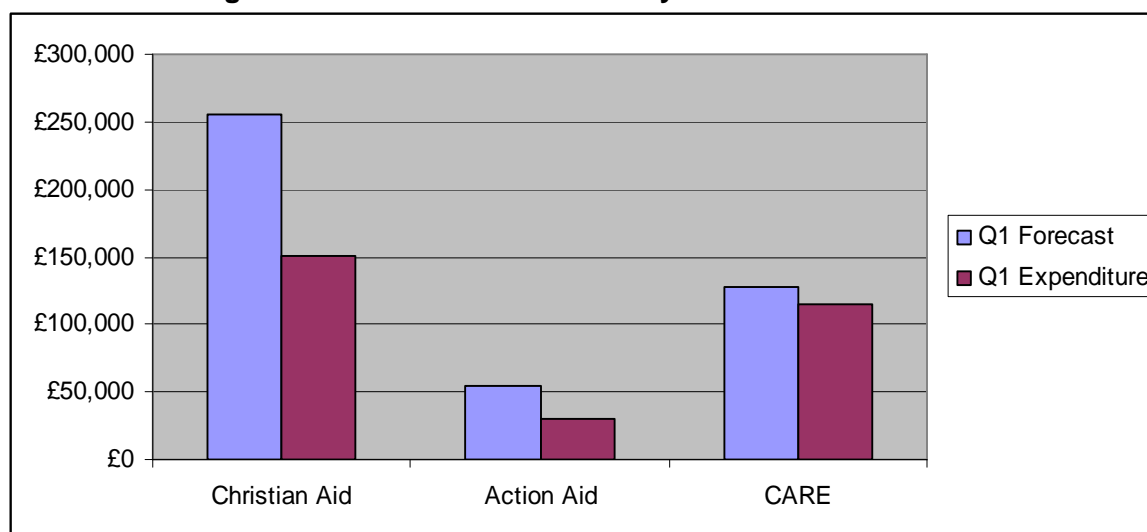
## 9. FINANCIAL REPORTING

Overall performance in the reporting period was not to the mark. Several factors contributed to this as highlighted in the 'Lessons Learnt' section above. Of the £438,147 quarter's forecast £295,539 was achieved, representing 67%. The programme activities were, therefore, down by 33%. This was due to various reasons, including (but not limited to):

- Some staff not being recruited on time at both PMU and member/partner level
- Late starting of most of the programme activities. Some started as late as May, due to logistical issues to do with contracts and transfer of grants.
- Late assets transfers hindered mobility at partner level.
- Sudden changes in currency valuations (49% official devaluation) that resulted in GBP gaining more strength, hence less reportable costs in GBP in the financial reports.

It was also noted that poor forecasting on some budget lines was another contributing factor towards some avoidable variances. There is need to make improvements in subsequent quarters to be more realistic with the estimates to avoid huge variances. CARE appeared closer to reality (Figure 2):

**Figure 2: Financial Performance by Consortium Members**



The low levels of activities had spiral effects on other budget lines such as monitoring visits, and national travel (Please see attached detailed expenditure report for details). It is also imperative to note that mis-postings between and among budget lines by both consortium members and partners cannot be ruled out. There is need to have sensitization meetings and regular checks with members and partners to ensure all expenses are correctly coded to budgeted lines and that all approval processes are fulfilled, making the budget holders accountable at the end of the day. Proper coding of activities according to budget codes from the initiator of a transaction will be assessed within all partners and encouraged in the next quarter.

## 10. TECHNICAL ANNEXES

### 10.1 April-June 2012 Activity Performance Tracking Table

- 10.2 July-Sept 2012 Consolidated Work Plan
- 10.3 April-June 2012 Quarterly Expenditure Report
- 10.4 July-Sept 2012 Consolidated Quarterly Forecast