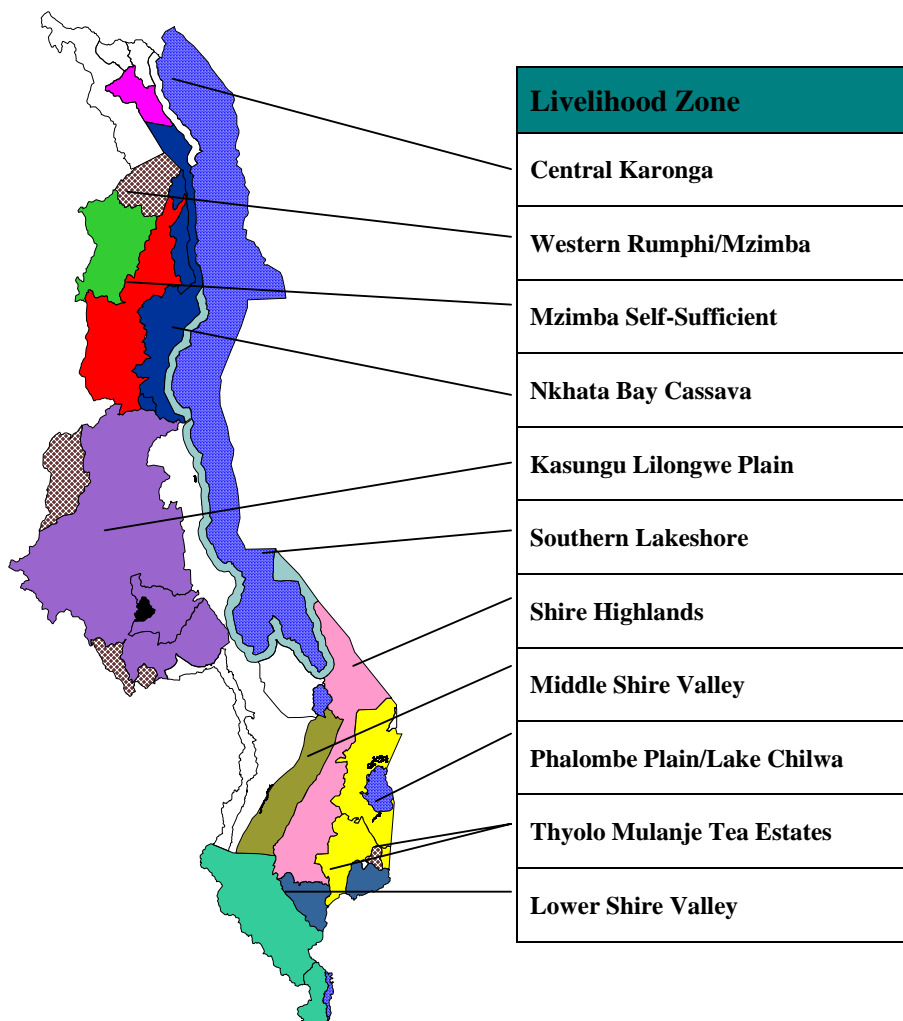


# Malawi Baseline Livelihood Profiles

May/June 2003



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## Preface

The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) is a consortium committee of government, NGO and UN agencies that is chaired by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (formerly the National Economic Council). MVAC members contributing to the livelihood rezoning and baseline assessments included: the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security, the Department of Local Government, the National Statistics Office, the Ministry of Health and Population, Save the Children (UK), World Vision International, FEWS NET, and WFP.

The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC), in collaboration with international partners, provided regional support for this assessment.

## Acknowledgements

The Malawi VAC would like to thank the consultants who worked with and trained the Malawi team throughout the rezoning, field training, fieldwork and analysis. These consultants are Julius Holt (FEWS NET), Jason Matus (SC (UK)), George Chimseu (consultant), Mark Lawrence (FEWS NET), Geoffrey Mlay (SC (UK)) and Ellen Mathys (SC (UK)). The efforts of the field teams that participated fully in a very long and intensive exercise are also much appreciated. The assessment would not have been possible without the assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security technical personnel at district (RDP) level and that of community members who answered all our questions with great patience. The assessment and associated training were supported by the SADC Regional VAC and funded by DFID, USAID, WFP, FEWS NET and SC (UK).

## Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms Used in this Document

AAH	Action Against Hunger
ADD	Agriculture Development Division, an administrative unit used by the MOAIFS. ADDs are smaller than regions but larger than districts. There are eight ADDs in Malawi.
ADMARC	Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (FAO/WFP missions to assess national food availability)
HEA	Household Economy Approach
EPA	Extension Planning Area, an administrative unit used by the MOAIFS. EPAs are one step down from RDPs or districts. EPAs were originally drafted on agro-ecological criteria, making them a useful unit for cross-linking administrative units such as districts with livelihood units, such as livelihood zones.
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization (of the United Nations)
FEG	Food Economy Group
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
<i>Ganyu</i>	Casual labour, usually agricultural (Chichewa)
GCM	Global Chronic Malnutrition
GFD	General Food Distribution
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning System Network
ME	Maize Equivalent
MEP&D	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MK	Malawi Kwacha (local currency). At the time of writing, US\$ 1 = MK 107 and €1 = MK 127
MOAIFS	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security
MOHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MVAC	Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
MT	Metric Tonnes
NFRA	National Food Reserve Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSO	National Statistics Office
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal –techniques of gathering data or information where the beneficiaries partake in the appraisal as equal partners, sharing the use of the data or information. PRA tools and methods are often the same as those used in RRA, the difference being that PRA emphasises the sharing aspect.
RDP	Rural Development Programme, an administrative unit used by the MOAIFS. RDPs are the next unit down from ADDs. Since 2002, RDPs have been delineated to equivalent areas as districts.

RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal –techniques consisting of methods and tools for quickly acquiring data, without the use of statistical samples. RRA techniques use crosschecking to ensure data integrity. RRA differs from PRA in that the latter takes longer but is more robust because the use and relevance of the data is shared with the interviewee.
RVAC	Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SCM	Severe Chronic Malnutrition
SC (UK)	Save the Children (United Kingdom)
VAC	Vulnerability Assessment Committee (see also RVAC and MVAC)
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI	World Vision International

## 1 Introduction

The food crisis of 2001 and 2002 highlights the fragile livelihoods and extreme vulnerability of the Malawi's rural population to food insecurity and crisis, while indications are that this vulnerability is increasing along side deepening poverty<sup>1</sup>. Despite the focus on poverty and poverty reduction in recent years, surprisingly little is currently known about the economic lives and livelihoods of the poor. The emergence of livelihood analysis as a major theme in development has begun to redress this knowledge gap and the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) has adopted it as an approach to analyse vulnerability. The MVAC's purpose is to undertake assessments and analysis with the objective of improving the understanding of vulnerability, as well as informing programming and policy to reduce vulnerability. One of the methods the MVAC has adopted to achieve this is a Livelihoods-Based Vulnerability Approach (LBVA) known as the Household Economy Approach (HEA)<sup>2</sup>. This livelihoods-based vulnerability approach generates information and analysis that provides a foundation for better understanding the dynamics of change and vulnerability within households.

Between May and July 2003, the MVAC conducted a livelihood rezoning exercise and an HEA baseline survey in 11 out of 17 livelihood zones in Malawi. These activities form the first stage in the establishment of a livelihood information and monitoring system within the MVAC that is designed to generate a deeper understanding of rural livelihoods, food access issues, and the ability of households from different wealth groups to cope with shocks and vulnerability. This report summarizes or 'profiles' some of the key descriptive information captured in the MVAC HEA livelihood baseline studies for each livelihood zone and wealth group. It provides a basic understanding of rural livelihood patterns in Malawi<sup>3</sup>. This baseline information is employed as an analytical modelling tool by the MVAC for monitoring household food and livelihood security; it will also be used to generate analysis for understanding the impact of different programming and policy on vulnerability, and food and livelihood security. The LBVA approach adopted by the MVAC is aimed at providing relevant information and analysis on food access and livelihoods to different Government Ministries, as well as international organizations and civil society to inform early warning, rural development strategies, poverty reduction, safety nets programming and food security policy formulation

This report is organized into three main sections: a brief discussion of key concepts and methodology, a section on the field data collection and analysis, followed by a series of 'profiles' for each of the 11 livelihood zones. Each of the 11 livelihood zone profiles contain a zone description, seasonal calendar, wealth breakdown, sources of food and cash by wealth group, a discussion of the main chronic and periodic hazards within the zone, household coping and response strategies to shocks, crisis warning indicators for the zone, and main conclusions and implications of for programming. This report is not a vulnerability assessment and nor is it a comparative analysis across zones; rather, it provides a general description of the baseline livelihood information that the MVAC has collected. In the winter of 2004, the MVAC plans to conduct further fieldwork to collect baseline information for the remaining six livelihood zones that were not covered in the May-July 2003 assessments. The MVAC has already begun to use the baseline information from the 11 zones to assess the current year situation with respect to food and livelihood security and to predict the effects of changes in the external environment (e.g.. impact of different maize price increases during the coming hunger season)<sup>4</sup>.

### 1.1. Key Concepts and Methodology

This section explains a number of key concepts and methods, which are essential for understanding how data has been gathered, analysed, organized and presented in this report.

<sup>1</sup> National Economic Council (Now Ministry of Economic Planning and Development), "Profile of Poverty in Malawi, 1998: Poverty Analysis of the Malawi Integrated Household Survey, 1997-98", (November 2000) and "Detailed Tables For A Poverty Profile of Malawi, 1998 (December 2000).

<sup>2</sup> The household economy approach is also often referred to as the 'Food Economy Approach'.

<sup>3</sup> The MVAC rezoning exercise is not discussed in this report. For a full description of the livelihood rezoning exercise see, "Report on Malawi VAC Livelihood Zones Revision Exercise in May 2003", Malawi VAC October, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> See MVAC, "The Malawi Food Security Assessment Report: 2003-2004 Agricultural Marketing Year", August 2003.

### 1.1.1. The Household Economy Approach (HEA)

The Household Economy Approach (HEA) is based in Amartya Sen's theory of exchange entitlements and economic theories of risk.<sup>5</sup> HEA was first developed and used by major international agencies during the 1990s to assess the impact of shocks, such as natural disasters, on food security and livelihoods; it is now accepted as a standard methodology and is widely used by WFP, USAID, FAO and others. The HEA first describes and quantifies household economy or the way in which typical households, with defined wealth characteristics, survive in normal times. This understanding and quantification is then combined within an analytical framework to assess the current situation with respect to food and livelihood security and to predict the effects of changes in the external environment (for example, crop failure, increases in production costs or market prices, loss of markets, etc.). Various national governments, donors, UN agencies and NGOs have also used the approach in a wide range of development contexts. More recently, applications linking macro and micro level policy analysis have been explored, particularly in relation to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)<sup>6</sup>. This is an area that the MVAC would like to explore further, once it has fully established the baseline and monitoring system.

Since this report presents only HEA baseline information, not analysis or predictions, a full explanation of the analytical methodology is not presented here (see footnote for references to a full description of the HEA approach and methodology)<sup>7</sup>. A short overview of the main elements of the basic analytical framework is presented in Appendix I.

### 1.1.2. Four Steps in HEA and Key Concepts<sup>8</sup>

There are four steps in a household economy analysis. The first two are concerned with dividing the population into groups of households that share similar characteristics in terms of their access to food and income. The assumption underlying these two steps is that access to food and income is determined by two main factors: *geography* and *economic status* (that is, relative *wealth*). While geography (where a household lives) determines the *options* for obtaining food and income, wealth generally determines a household's *ability to exploit those options*. The third step involves developing a baseline picture of food access, income and expenditure for each wealth group. The fourth and final step is to combine information on baseline access with that on hazard and response in order to generate projections of future food and income access.

**Step 1: Livelihood Zoning.** This is about deciding on the main *geographical groups* that households belong to. It involves mapping out Livelihood Zones or areas where households share similar options for obtaining food and income. The approach is to identify those factors (such as climate, soil, proximity to rivers, access to markets etc.) that determine the basic food and income options (the crops that will grow, the livestock that can be raised, the wild plants that can be collected, the fish that can be caught, and so on) and then to group similar areas together. In the case of Malawi, the exercise was one of updating an earlier food economy zone map prepared by Save the Children dating from 1996. This was done through a review of available secondary source material, a workshop at national level involving all VAC members and a series of key informants interviews at district level with relevant technical personnel<sup>9</sup>.

All aspects of a household food and livelihood economy are influenced by seasonality and are therefore not constant over time. Understanding seasonal variations is therefore essential in HEA analysis in order to:

- Understand the seasonality of different crops produced in the livelihood zone by different wealth groups, i.e. when they are planted, eaten green, harvested, sold and stored,
- Understand food, income, and labour access for different groups in different seasons of the year,

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<sup>5</sup> See Sen, A. Poverty and Famines: An essay in entitlement and deprivation. Clarendon Press, (1981)

<sup>6</sup> See papers produced by Lopez, J, SC (UK) Tanzania Programme.

<sup>7</sup> For a full description of the approach and methodology, see Boudreau, T. The Food Economy Approach: A Framework for Understanding Rural Livelihoods, Relief and Rehabilitation Network Paper, Overseas Development Institute, London (1998). Also, see Seaman, J. *et al*, The Household Economy Approach: A Resource Manual for Practitioners, Save the Children –UK, London, (2000).

<sup>8</sup> This sections draws heavily upon different HEA training manuals, including Food Economy Training: The Field Method, Food Economy Group (FEG) draft May 2003; The Household Economy Approach (HEA): Training Pack for Trainees (Level 1), Save the Children – UK, Food Security Livelihood Unit, 2000.

<sup>9</sup> For a full report on this exercise see the document: Report on Malawi VAC Livelihood Zones Revision Exercise in May 2004, Malawi VAC October 2003.

- Identify and monitor trends and changes over time (e.g. monitoring the impact of interventions),
- Determine which indicators are useful for monitoring seasonal food and income access,
- Discover correlations and connections between different seasonal patterns (such as precipitation, income and expenditure) which might help to understand causes and effects,
- Know which periods have unequal production and consumption (for example, when income-expenditure = debt)
- Identify periods of rainfall and water levels

The basic tool for seasonal analysis in HEA is the Seasonal Calendar, which is a visual representation of the timing of access to main food and income sources during a normal or typical year. The MVAC assessment team developed seasonal calendars through district and community key informants for each of the Livelihood Zones.

**Step 2: Wealth Breakdown**. The second step is to break down the population within a particular Livelihood Zone into groups of households according to their ability to exploit the local food and income options of the zone. Within any community, even one where everybody may be considered poor in absolute terms (i.e. compared to other better-off parts of the country or compared to those living in other countries), there will be differences between households. The different types of household live in different ways and are able to respond to external shocks (e.g. crop failures, price increase, loss of labour markets, etc) in different ways (with differing levels of success).

This is also true in rural Malawi where 65% of the population is considered 'poor' - the rural poor are not homogenous.

The major factor that differentiates one 'type' of household from another is 'wealth'. In HEA, 'wealth groups' or socio-economic groups within a Livelihood Zone are sets of households who have similar levels of assets, and employ similar strategies to gain access to food and cash income. In HEA, wealth is always in relative (and local) terms not in absolute terms. Statistical data may indicate that 80% or even 90% of the rural population in the district lives below the national poverty line, but this is a measure of poverty on a national, absolute scale. In a livelihoods analysis we are interested in understanding some of the differences in livelihood patterns between different groups of households within the community – in which case it is not particularly useful to lump 80% or 90% of the population together in one group. In an analysis of relative wealth, the 'middle' are in the majority. 'Poor' means poorer than most households, while 'better-off' means better off than most households.

Community-based key informants derive the wealth groups, with guidance from the HEA practitioner using different rapid rural appraisal techniques (proportional piling, etc). A wealth breakdown has two elements: (1) a division of the population (that is, an estimate of the percentage of the population falling into each group) and (2) a description of the key defining resources and characteristics of the wealth group. In each Livelihood Zone the different wealth groups are identified and described and it is these groups that form the basis for the focus group interviews from which baseline access information is obtained. The population can be divided into three, four, five or even more wealth groups, depending on how the community view their society as well as the purpose and level of analysis required in the HEA. The most frequently used number of groups, and which the MVAC chose for the current baseline, is three: the 'poor', the 'middle' and the 'better-off'. The extreme ends of the wealth spectrum: the very poorest (destitute) households that are largely dependent on charity, or the richest households (the 'richest of the rich'), are normally not of interest in HEA analysis. These two groups tend to constitute only a small minority of households, and in the case of the former are often not economically active.

The criteria used to divide households into wealth groups depend on the defining characteristics for the options of accessing food and income. Relative wealth is determined by a number of factors including landholding, cultivation size, capital, skills and/or household labour, and livestock holdings. In a pastoral society, wealth may be primarily determined by the size of one's herd, while in an agricultural society wealth is more likely to be associated with land ownership, as well as livestock ownership. In the case of Malawi, the rural economy is predominately subsistence agricultural with limited livestock holdings and cultivation size and production levels are less dependent on access to land than the ability to access agricultural inputs (i.e. fertilizer, seeds, farm implements and labour). Wealth groups were therefore largely determined by the size of land cultivation and production levels of the household, as well as access to capital and agricultural inputs.

**Wealth groups are different from a vulnerable group.** It is important to highlight that in HEA, defining 'wealth' is not defining 'vulnerability'. It is not possible to talk about 'vulnerable' groups without giving a context (i.e. cattle disease, drought, closure of markets), as different households are vulnerable to different things. A poor household that does not purchase staple food, is not very vulnerable to increases in staple food prices, but is vulnerable to crop failure through drought. A rich household, who purchases all its food and buys this food through the sale of tobacco, is vulnerable to tobacco crop failures and export market closures. Poverty and richness are relatively constant states —a household is

poor all the time— but vulnerability depends on the context. The same household is vulnerable to food failure in some circumstances, but not in others. *This is a critical distinction in understanding what is meant by the term “vulnerability”.*

**Step 3: Analysis of Baseline Access.** An analysis of baseline access involves the analysis of sources of food, income and expenditure in a *reference year* for typical households within each wealth group. The reference year is generally defined as a ‘typical’ or ‘normal’ year. The process is one of:

- Identifying sources of food and income and their relative importance to the household’s total food and income access,
- Quantifying access to food and income and expenditure over a 12-month baseline period.

**Sources of food** are foods the household consumes and include food gained through own crop and livestock production, food exchanged with labour or other commodities, food purchased, food collected (e.g. wild foods, hunting, fishing, etc.), or food received from gifts and relief. The importance of differentiating between methods by which food is achieved is that the way a household gets food defines its vulnerability; for example, a household is vulnerable to crop failure if the household grows crops<sup>10</sup>. The analysis provides an understanding of the how and how much food and income are obtained from different sources within a reference year and provides the starting point for analysing the impact of a hazard.

Due to the problems of ‘adding up’ different foods, HEA focuses on adequacy of household access to food energy, measured in kilocalories (kcal)<sup>11</sup>. All ‘food’ consumed by a household is first converted into kilocalorie equivalents of energy using food composition tables<sup>12</sup> and then each total kcal for the different sources of food is expressed as a percentage of total kilocalories of food consumed. To assess whether a household has adequate access to food total energy value is compared against a *minimum calorie requirement* for the household based upon household size<sup>13</sup>.

**Sources of income** in HEA are sources of cash income derived from the sale of goods or services, including crop sales, paid employment (casual labour or ganyu), livestock and livestock product sales, natural resource exploitation (for example, charcoal, firewood, honey, grass, etc), self-employment (for example, petty trade, small business, handicraft sales, etc.), and land or asset rental. **Cash income** is net income rather than gross income, meaning that production costs are deducted from the gross value.

**Step 4: Outcome Analysis.** Outcome analysis refers to the effects of a *hazard*<sup>14</sup> such as price increases or crop failure (or a combination of both) on *future* access to food and income, so that decisions can be taken about the most appropriate types of intervention to implement. The rationale behind this approach is that a good understanding of how people have survived in the past provides a sound basis for projecting into the future. Three types of information are combined: information on baseline access, information on possible *hazards* (that is, factors that may affect access to food/income in the future) and information on *response strategies* (that is, the sources of additional food and income that people will turn to when exposed to a hazard). The term ‘response strategies’ is preferred to the term ‘coping strategies’, for two reasons. Firstly, people often use coping strategies to refer to regular components of everyday livelihoods (such as selling firewood), which strictly speaking are only coping strategies when intensified in response to a hazard. Secondly, ‘coping’ can imply that the strategy in question is cost-free, which is not always the case.

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<sup>10</sup> This is a simplification to highlight the point. It might be more complicated in that the household is still affected by crop failure since they are reliant on exchange of labour (e.g. weeding) for food. Crop failure could lead to reduced labour demand and increased vulnerability for the households dependent on supplying labour to access food.

<sup>11</sup> For a full discussion of individual and household energy requirements and application within HEA, see John Seaman, *et al.* The Household Economy Approach: A Resource Manual for Practitioners, SC UK 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Food composition tables are conversion tables of kilocalories per 100 grams of food. For kilocalorie conversion tables and the weights and measures conversion tables used in the MVAC Baseline Assessment, see The MVAC Food And Livelihood Economy Field Handbook, May-June 2003.

<sup>13</sup> A standard minimum energy requirement for a population with a developing country demographic profile is estimated at 2,070 per person kcal per day see WFP/UNHCR, Guidelines for Estimating food and nutritional needs in emergencies, 1997. MVAC uses an estimate of 2100 kcal/person/day in calculating minimum energy requirements.

<sup>14</sup> The word ‘shock’ is sometimes used instead of ‘hazard’. ‘Shock’ implies a *sudden* change, whereas the change may have a more gradual onset. Although ‘hazard’ is probably a more accurate term, both words are used inter-changeably.



In the following descriptions of the Livelihood Zones, a further distinction in response strategies is made: households respond in two ways to a hazard; first, they *expand existing strategies* and when the situation becomes severe, they then turn to a number of *distress strategies*. Response strategies change as the period of stress increases. Expansions of existing strategies are reversible (e.g. short-term dietary change) and require a low commitment of domestic resources. Distress strategies, on the other hand, are employed when the household is nearer to collapse and are employed when other coping mechanisms fail. Recovery after the adoption of distress strategies will come a considerably long time after the event (if at all). Hence, if an intervention takes place at an earlier stage before the use of distress strategies, recovery is quicker.

A distinction is also made between *chronic hazards* (ones that affect households in the zone every year) and *periodic hazards* or *hazards that only occur intermittently* (one that affects households in some but not all years in the zone).

The approach can be summarised as follows:

*Outcome is a function of the Baseline, the Hazard and the Response*

*Or*

*Outcome = f (Baseline, Hazard, Response)*

This report presents baseline, hazard and some household response strategies as a background description of the different livelihood zones in Malawi and does not present any outcome analysis. Since this is not an outcome analysis report, the analytical methodology is not presented here (see Appendix II for more information). The MVAC will conduct regular outcome analysis as a vulnerability-monitoring tool. The MVAC conducted its first outcome analysis in July-August 2003 to assess the food security situation in Malawi for the 2003-2004 agricultural marketing year<sup>15</sup>. This has been followed up with outcome analyses in November-December 2003 (again, for the 2003-2004 agricultural marketing year) and just recently, in April-May 2004, for the 2004-2005 agricultural marketing year.

## 1.2. Malawi Baseline Livelihood Assessment

### 1.2.1. Sources of Information and Method of Collection

There are six types of information needed in a household economy analysis and the data required to complete these is collected at several different levels, as shown in **Table I**. This reports contains a description of the first five categories of information that the MVAC collected during the May-July 2003 Assessment (livelihood rezoning, wealth breakdowns, baseline access, hazard quantification and Response).

**Table I - Sources of Information**

	Six Categories of information in Household Economy Analysis					
	LZ Zoning	Wealth Breakdown	Baseline Access	Hazard	Response	Outcome
Secondary Data	X			X		
National/District Workshop	X					
District Key Informants	X	X		X		
Market visit or Trader interview				X		
Community key informants		X		X		
Wealth group focus group			X		X	
Assessment team						X

The basic method for data collection in HEA focuses on the use of rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools and interview techniques. Two features of this approach are that the field enquiry is semi-structured and that at least the preliminary analysis is carried out on the spot. This means that it is sufficiently flexible to

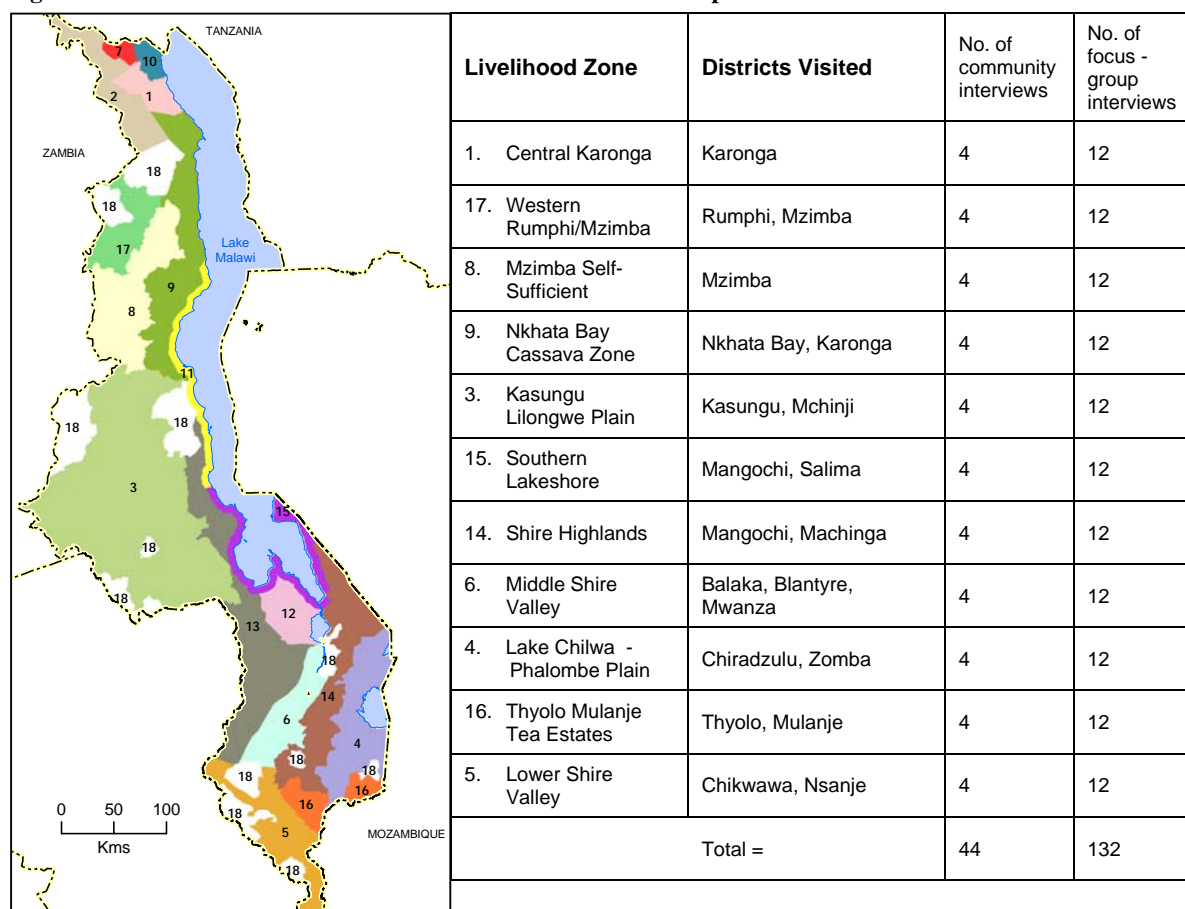
<sup>15</sup> See MVAC. "The Malawi Food Security Assessment Report: 2003-04 Agricultural Marketing Year", August 2003.

allow the enquiry to take an unexpected direction, should this be necessary, and it allows information to be cross-checked or important leads to be followed up before the team leaves the field. In the field, information is gathered primarily through key informant and focus group interviews undertaken at various levels. The process is summarised in Table II, below.

**Table II - MVAC Baseline Assessment Interviews, Participants and Outputs**

Level at which interview undertaken	Participants in the interview	Outputs
<i>National</i>		-
<i>District</i>	Technical staff from local government (e.g. MOAIFS), NGOs and other relevant organisations.	- Verification of Livelihood Zones within the district - Information on recent hazards affecting food security (including recent crop production data)
<i>Community/Village</i>	Community key informants	- Seasonal Calendar of crop production and other food and income acquisition strategies - Wealth Breakdown - Information on recent hazards and responses to these
<i>Individual wealth group</i>	Focus groups consisting of members of a specific wealth group	- Quantified data on food and income access for a 12-month baseline period. - Information on current hazard and response strategies.

**Figure 1 - Livelihood Zones Visited & Number of Interviews Completed**



### 1.2.2. Defining the Baseline Year

One objective of the assessment in Malawi was to generate information that can be fed into decision-making concerning longer-term policy and programming. For this reason it was considered desirable to develop an analysis for a 'normal' year, i.e. one that could be considered reasonably typical of conditions prevailing in Malawi in most years. It

was not easy to select a *specific* recent year that met this criterion, since 2001 and 2002 had been crisis years, while the two years before that were years of unusually good production. For this reason questions were asked at village level about a more general 'normal' year. Provided it was carefully explained, 'normal' was a concept that seemed well understood by village informants in the field. In practice, it often meant a year of production rather similar to the harvest in 2003. Of course, a normal year in one region may not be a normal year in another, as was the case for Central Karonga livelihood zone and Western Rumphu and Mzimba livelihood zone this year. The current year was not used to define the normal year in these zones.

The problem of defining 'normal' applies equally to market prices. This is especially the case for maize, the price of which has fluctuated considerably in the last two years, making it difficult to know what can now be considered 'normal'. There is also the complication of inflation, which means that prices from three or more years ago (which were much lower than now) have little relevance today. The team therefore opted to construct the baseline using prices from the last 12 months. In practice, this meant using an average purchase price for maize of roughly 17 MK/kg, which is high by historical standards, and may be high in relation to the next 12 months.

### **1.2.3. Scope of the Baseline Survey**

Seventeen zones were defined during the re-zoning exercise. Due to a limitation on resources, only eleven of these could be included in the livelihoods baseline assessment survey (see **Figure 1**). Selection of the eleven was based on a number of factors, including: (a) population, to include as large a proportion of the national population as possible; (b) known vulnerability to external hazards and (c) expected levels of crop production in 2003 and 2004.

From within each zone, two districts and four villages were selected for fieldwork<sup>16</sup>. Villages were selected according to information provided by the district-level key informants. The aim was to visit villages considered reasonably typical of the zone as a whole. In each village one community level and three focus group interviews were completed. *In total 11 livelihood zones, 21 districts, 44 community interviews and 132 focus group interviews were conducted in the initial baseline survey.* A complete list of the sample of villages surveyed is presented in **Appendix III**.

### **1.2.4. Implementation of Baseline Survey**

The assessment involved four modules of activities over a continuous period of two months from May 2003. The assessment team consisted of MVAC members and training was an important component of the work and was fully incorporated within all four activities. Revision and updating of livelihood zones was the first activity, followed by a 10-day HEA instruction for MVAC field teams. Four MVAC field teams composed of 4 to 5 people completed the baseline fieldwork from June 4 – 26 2003, and a further week was spent on analysis. Approximately one week was spent in each of the zones covered.

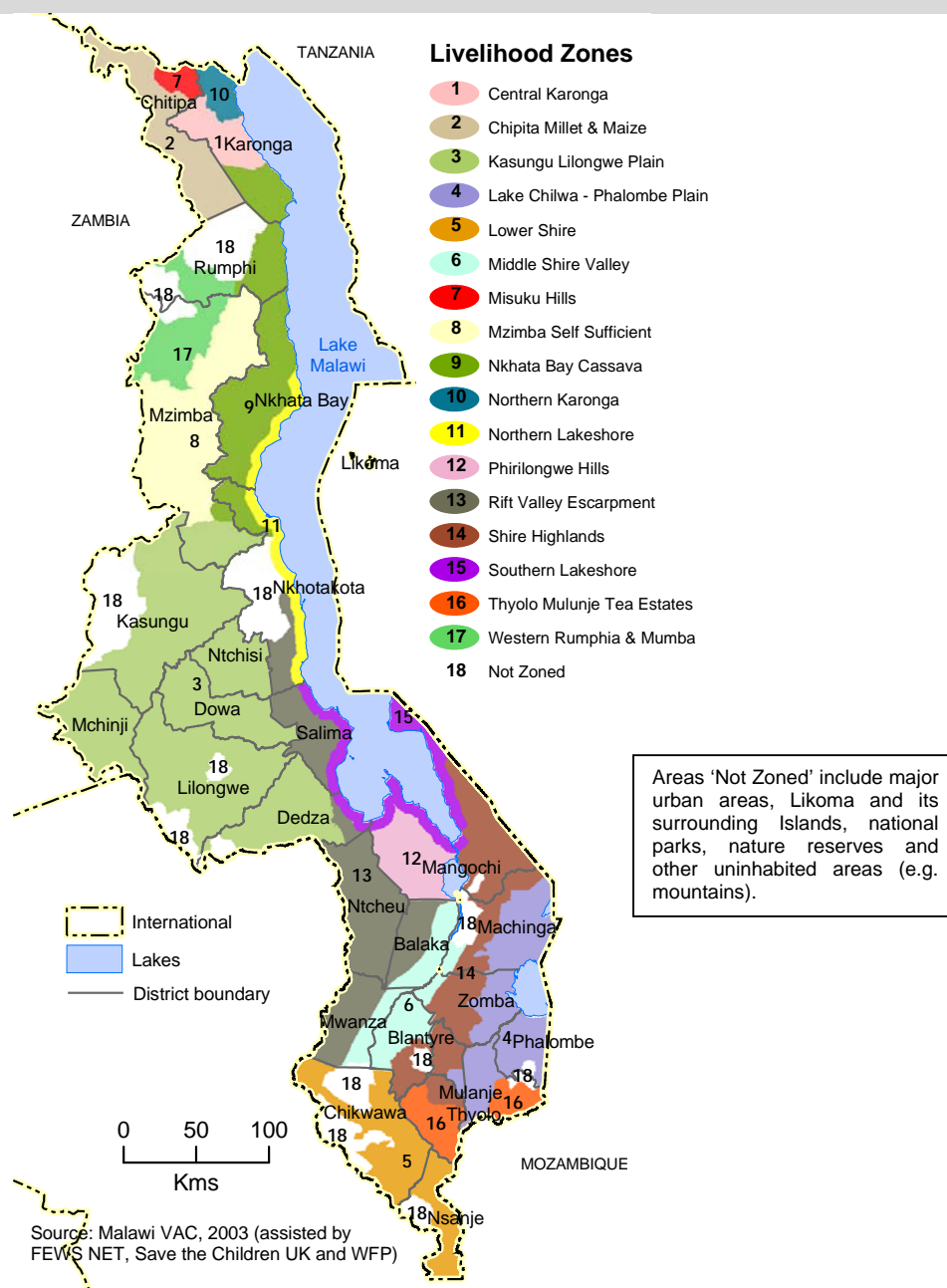
The assessment was a joint exercise involving staff from the following MVAC members:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ministry of Economic Planning and Development</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation &amp; Food Security</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Health and Population</li> <li>▪ Department of Local Government</li> <li>▪ National Statistics Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FEWS NET</li> <li>▪ World Food Programme</li> <li>▪ Save the Children (UK)</li> <li>▪ World Vision International</li> </ul>
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Fifteen MVAC members participated in the four modules of which nine were from government (MOAIFS, MEP&D, MOHP, NSO, & Department of Local Government) and six from international organizations (FEWS NET, SC (UK), WFP, WVI). Five consultants assisted in different components of the assessment in training and leading the MVAC team (2 FEWS NET/FEG consultants, 2 SC (UK) consultants, 1 local Malawian consultant).

<sup>16</sup> Livelihood Zone boundaries generally follow EPA boundaries, not district boundaries, so that a single district may include parts of more than one Livelihood Zone. Where a district is listed as included in the exercise, fieldwork was undertaken in that part of the district falling within the boundaries of the required zone.

## NATIONAL LIVELIHOOD ZONE MAP



**Table III - POPULATION BY LIVELIHOOD ZONE<sup>17</sup>**

Livelihood Zone	Population	% Of total	Livelihood Zone	Population	% Of total
Chitipa Millet and Maize	116,402	0.98%	Southern Lakeshore	505,979	4.24%
Misuku Hills	36,289	0.30%	Rift Valley Escarpment	1,167,578	9.78%
Northern Karonga	111,720	0.94%	Phirilongwe Hills	211,697	1.77%
Central Karonga	44,516	0.37%	Shire Highlands	1,095,667	9.18%
Northern Lakeshore	111,070	0.93%	Middle Shire Valley	416,254	3.49%
Western Rumphia & Mzimba	139,250	1.17%	Lake Chilwa – Phalombe Plain	1,161,418	9.73%
Mzimba Self-Sufficient	430,506	3.61%	Thyolo-Mulanje Tea Estates	669,816	5.61%
Nkhata Bay Cassava	291,135	2.44%	Lower Shire Valley	648,358	5.43%
Kasungu-Lilongwe Plain	3,236,493	27.11%	Not Zoned	1,543,786	12.93%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>11,937,934</b>		

<sup>17</sup> Source: NSO Population Projections and MoAIFS, Populations by EPA.

