



Republic of Malawi

LGAP SUPPORT TO COVID-19 RESPONSE IN MALAWI

A T M A Y 27 2020

BACKGROUND

The Government of Malawi adopted the Decentralization Policy in 1998 and passed a new Local Government Act based on the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Malawi. However, progress on decentralization has been slower than anticipated, while both administrative and fiscal decentralization have proceeded without sufficient coordination.

Nonetheless, positive developments have taken place at the council level - with most of the key sectors being devolved, including human resources. The election of Ward Councillors has also helped to reinvigorate the Local Government system, along with efforts to define a clear decentralization road map for the country.

LGAP's mandate is to support this decentralization process and the functionality of the local government structures, systems and processes.



Photo: WFP-Malawi 2020

FOCUS AREA

LGAP works with the Government of Malawi (GoM) and 28 District Councils to improve local government functionality, promote citizen engagement, awareness and Council legitimacy. LGAP recognizes that any disruption caused by COVID-19 or its secondary economic impacts has the potential to disrupt local service delivery, impact livelihoods and set back recent gains in decentralization. Therefore, following the government's announcement of a State of Emergency on 20 March 2020, LGAP has worked with the GoM, other national officials and district officials to create and implement a COVID-19 contingency plan for a speedy and coherent response, leveraging the project's geographic reach across Malawi. Intervention areas include:

- Human Resource Management / Payroll
- District / Contingency Planning
- Emergency Resource Tracking and Situational Awareness
- Public Communications
- Support to the GoM and their COVID-19 related Task Force

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Conducted a joint rapid needs assessment with MLGRD for response efforts in 28 districts.
- Activated education clusters in all district councils to support the implementation of the national education response on COVID-19.
- Supported MLGRD, the Local Government Service Commission, and Ministry of Health to recruit, deploy health care workers for the response.
- Supported MALGA to lobby Government to provide fast-track financing for the response
- Launched broadcast of Ministry of Health-approved COVID-19 messages on national and community radio stations.
- Utilizing project's district-level integration platforms to link iNGO humanitarian response efforts with identified local needs.
- Oriented 29 DIOs on risk communications and community engagement on COVID-19, together with DHPOs and DCHCs.

ACTIVITIES AND PLANS

- Ensure local alignment with Malawi's COVID-19 National Response Plan, through review of district development plans and integration of emergency response mechanisms.
- Work with Department of Human Resources Management & Development to analyze data and recruit / deploy health personnel specializing in preventative, clinical and health technical support services.
- Support to Councils on consistent use of IFMIS for timely report production and reduction of irregularities, including in the use, oversight of new emergency funding.
- Support for COVID-19 public information dissemination through district communications plans and outreach.
- Support to MALGA as a key interlocutor to advocate for district needs / roles.
- Continued participation in COVID-19 cluster and donor meetings to ensure coordination.

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