

# The nutrition-sensitive Village Level Action Planning (VLAP) – Experiences and results from Malawi.

Empowering communities to actively shape their future and achieve food and nutrition security



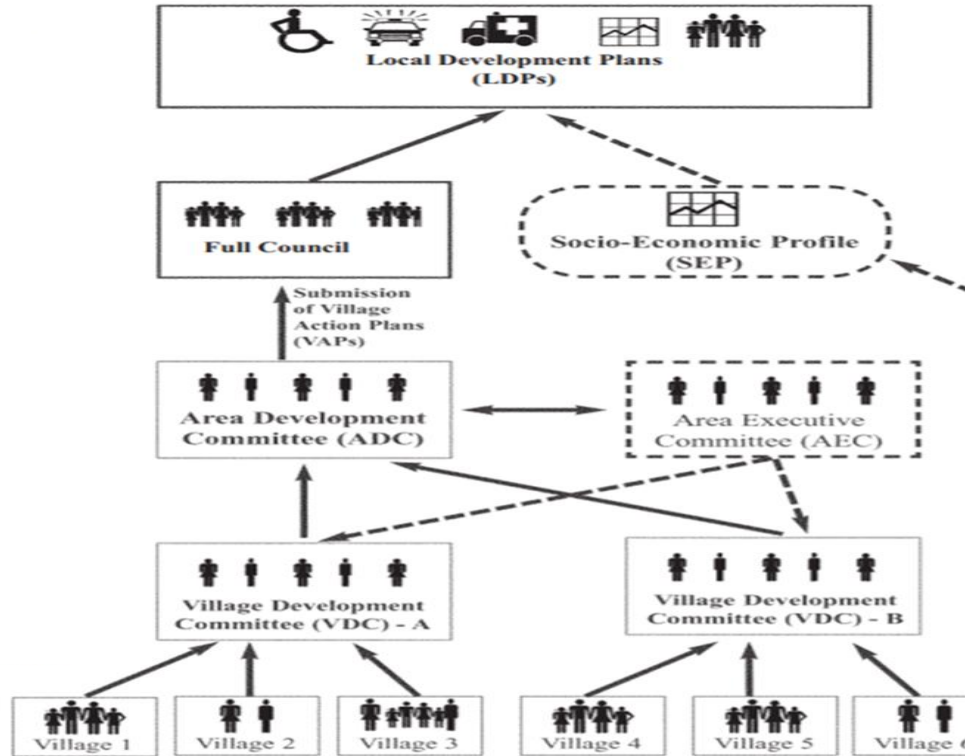
Implemented by



## Introduction to VLAPs

- Innovative interpretation of the bottom-up development planning process at village level; **“Leave No One Behind”**
- District planning tool since 2004 but focused on infrastructure and outside resources; new approach **empowers communities**
- Life-giving factors (among them food and nutrition security - where FNSP part of a global program commissioned by BMZ implemented by GIZ comes into play) are identified by each household.
- FNSP aims at **improving the nutrition situation and resilience** to food crises of women aged 15 – 49 and children aged 6 -23 months in two districts.
- Ways of improvement including **own resources** (land, soil, livestock, skills, etc.) are taken into account; **village plans feed into 5 year District Development Plan**

VLAP & SEP =  
Basis for LDPs



VLAP



168,000 community members benefitted



# Lessons Learned

1. Important to use **existing governmental structures** when approaching communities: in Malawi this means working with the legal, elected leadership and traditional authorities (ADC/VDC vs TA/GVH)
2. **Leave No One Behind:** to be addressed specifically during planning sessions e.g. people living with HIV/Aids or Albinism will not address their specific needs in group settings.
3. Government Extension workers from **different ministries** need to be cooperating with each other for best results (e.g. if Extension Worker facilitating the VLAP is from Ministry of Health but the community is mostly struggling with issues to do with irrigation, Extension Workers need to be aware of who to contact)

# Food for thought

1. Innovative approach currently quite costly: could be reduced if Ministry of Local Government declares e.g. a “VLAP Month” and makes the VLAPs the priority and normal work of Extension Workers. Currently they do it on top of their normal work and require funds for transport and food.
  - How are village plans made in your context/country?
  - Who is involved? Who is leading the process?
2. Some communities have started using the plans as starting points when they are approached by NGOs or Foundations who have identified their community for their project. Communities then show them the plans and use it to explain the communities priorities. In the long run all NGOs should go through the District Council and align their implementation along the District Development Plans.
  - Has this sort of coordination through decentralized planning systems worked in your context and if so how?
  - Do you think it has potential?