

ASSESSING FOOD AID DEPENDENCY IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY IN MALAWI: THE CASE OFTRADITIONAL AUTHORITY NKAYA IN BALAKA

[HARVEY KAGOLO]

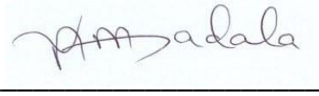
Thyolo, Malawi

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July, 2021

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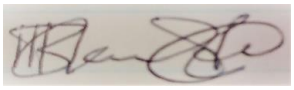
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DECLARATION

I Harvey Kagolo declare that this research project represents my own work and that it has never been submitted to this institution or any other institution for any academic purpose. All sources of information have been appropriately acknowledged.

Signature 

Date: 20 July 2021

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ABSTRACT

Malawi experiences food shortages across its districts mostly those in the southern region. Government and non-governmental organizations have been distributing aid in terms of food and cash to alleviate the negative effects of food insecurity. Studies show that floods, dry spells, high cost of staple food and, infection of fall armyworms are some of the causes of food insecurity. Research also shows that food aid has aggravated dependency syndrome on victims which has negatively impacted food security. The assessment mainly is centered on assessing factors that have caused food aid dependency negative impacts on food security in TA Nkaya in Balaka by investigating household capacity regarding food security and governmental and non-governmental organizations' approaches in the management of food security. The assessment reveals that food aid beneficiaries' food security is frustrated by the low capacity of households. Low education levels, low employment rate, lack of diversity in food and income sources, and reliance on rain-fed agriculture have reduced the capacity of households regarding food security. Various approaches to solve food insecurity by the government and non-governmental organizations are engaged. These are the food production approach, food nutrition approach and resilience-building approach and the activities involve are food item distribution, cash transfers, farm inputs distribution through subsidies, increasing potable water infrastructures, and tree planting programs. However, the approaches found to miss root causes of food insecurity have led to dependency syndrome on aid by food shortage victims which have greatly impacted food security negatively through several factors. Analysis of the results shows that gender issues are not taken onboard into the approaches as food insecurity affects female and child-headed households more than those headed by men. Lack of community participatory needs assessment, poor governance on food aid and disaster risks, lack of awareness on the purpose of food aid to beneficiaries, and wrong targeting of food aid beneficiaries are other factors that have contributed to food aid dependency negative impact on food security. In addition to that diversification of income-generating projects and food production is underrated.

The factors for food aid dependency impacts on food security indicate that there is more that needs to be done based on the sustainable development goal (SDG) of ending hunger by promoting food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable

agriculture. On the same, the SFDRR 2015-2030 enhances disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. The MGDS III also acknowledges that Malawi continues to face food insecurity and constraints have made Malawi dependant on food aid. Therefore, the research recommends the following remedies that need to be focused on to reduce food aid dependence to ensure food security.

- Gender mainstreaming into food security programs should be enhanced.
- There is a need to promote awareness and sensitization of the purpose of food aid to beneficiaries so that the whole objective of food aid is achieved.
- The targeting method of food aid beneficiaries should take on board VCPCs suggestions to include the need aid households.
- Comprehensive participatory need assessment should be prioritized.
- Good governance for food security should be enhanced at all levels.
- Encourage farm animal rearing to increase assets as capacity, and encourage small-scale businesses for income generation.

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Before everything, let me thank the almighty God, my Creator, for all the blessings, protection, and guidance upon me.

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Let me also take this advantage to pay my special gratitude to my father and mother, my hero and heroine respectively, for all the support from financial, spiritual, and moral. I should gratefully give more appreciation to my supportive wife, Esther Damiano, for always stand by me through all the times we have been. Am also not forgetting my brothers and sister (Edwin, Yvonne, Chikumbutso, Chancy, and Mayamiko) and all my relatives that have been supportive during the period.

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DEDICATION

In a very special way, I dedicate this work to my beloved parents Wilfred Feneck Kagolo and Velia Kamwendo, my lovely wife Esther Damiano, and my late grandfather Feneck Dawson Kagolo, may he be remembered. You all prove to be the best pillars in my life. I value the support you provide in all the dimensions of my life and I don't take this for granted. To my parents and my wife; may God bless you, give you a long and healthy life and protection. To my late grandfather; your advice remains alive in me, and I will always remember you.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACPC : Area Civil Protection Committee

ADMARC : Agricultural Development Marketing Corporation

DADO : District Agricultural Development Officer

DCPC : District Civil Protection Committee

DoDMA : Department of Disaster Management

DRRO : District Rehabilitation and Relief Officer

DRMP : Disaster Risk Management Policy

DRR : Disaster Risk Reduction

FFW : Food-For-Work

FYF : Find Your Feet

MGDS III : Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy III

MSCE : Malawi School Certificate Of Education

MUSTREC : Malawi University of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee

MVAC : Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee

NGO : Non-Governmental Organisation

NRS : National Resilience Strategy

PLSCE : Primary Leaving School Certificate of Education

SDG : Sustainable Development Goals

TA : Traditional Authority

VCPC : Village Civil Protection Committee

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1. CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Food security as defined by the United Nations' Committee, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life (United Nations, 2011). Food security is the access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life (Abdalla, 2007). In Malawi, food security is generally defined in terms of adequate production of and access to maize, the country's staple crop (Makombe et al., 2010). Achieving food security is one of the high goals of a Malawi government. Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy III (MGDs III) through its Agriculture, Water Development, and Climate Change Management priority recognizes food security as a centre for sustained economic growth and poverty reduction (Malawi government, 2017). However, for the past decade, Malawi has experienced food insecurity across its districts which most of them are in the southern region.

Assessments of 2015, 2016-2017 and 2018 reported 2,833,212, 1,043,000 and, 3,306, 405 people to be food insecure and need assistance (Malawi government, 2015, 2017, 2018) respectively. Recently, the 2019-2020 IPC acute food insecurity analysis indicated 673,000 people estimated to be in acute food insecurity Phase 3 due to hazards such as dry spells, fall armyworms and floods. The report estimated three districts were to be in Phase 3 (Crisis) during the period October 2019 – March 2020 which include Balaka, Neno and Nsanje.

Food aid is required when the quality and quantity of available food or access to food is not sufficient to prevent excessive mortality, morbidity or malnutrition. It is for this reason that food aid to alleviate immediate food crisis effects is needed. However, food aid must also commit to addressing food security by improving agricultural productivity, economic growth, food security and nutritional status through long-term strategies (Abbott, 2012). Organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, such as the Red Cross, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), World Food Program (WFP), Project Concern International (PCI), and the Department of Disaster Management (DoDMA), have been providing food assistance to food-insecure victims.

Zeweld (2013), evaluated the relationship of food aid to domestic food production and employment. He explains that food aid has undermined incentives to domestic food production as Food-For-Work (FFW) has harmed local production and has motivated households to reallocate their labour away from production towards FFW. Thus, food aid has created a disincentive effect and discouraged farmers to supply more. He continued to say, food aid disincentive effect of food aid on labour supply exists but mainly remains in the agriculture sector. Households that received food aid for two consecutive years have a higher probability of dependence syndrome than households that received less than two years or didn't receive it at all. This indicates a tendency of food aid beneficiaries to rely on aid every year. However, there has been little attention to factors leading to food aid dependency negative impact on food security to help food aid organizations and beneficiaries effectively and sustainably address food shortages to build back better communities, household capacity, and increase resilience to ensure proper food security management in the face of hazards.

1.2. Problem statement

Dependency on food aid has greatly exacerbated food insecurity in Malawi but the factors are still not clearly described. National Resilience Strategy of Malawi of 2018-2030 urges to put vulnerable households on a more sustainable path by strengthening their resilience to seasonally predictable shocks. Access to food and the maintenance of an adequate nutritional status are critical determinants of people's survival in a disaster (United Nations, 2011). The vulnerability of a household or community determines its ability to cope with exposure to food shortages. Although different organizations are putting effort to reduce food insecurity through food support, the food insecure population is still high. Zeweld (2013), noted the negative impact of food aid on domestic food production and labour for development. Food aid, almost by definition, solves acute shortcomings of poverty and food insecurity, however, it does not completely tackle root causes (Barrett et al., 2006). Referring to the code of conduct for the international Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and National Disaster Risk Management Policy of Malawi in disaster relief urges sustainable recovery to reduce future vulnerabilities to disasters. The fourth priority of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is to Enhance disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation

and reconstruction. Malawi Disaster Risk Management Policy indicates that recovery is often ignored during the implementation process and there is no systematic monitoring of recovery interventions and both disaster response and recovery miss the opportunity to integrate essential elements of DRR. However, the factors for food aid dependence impact on food security have not been explained to link food aid and sustainable recovery for better management of food security. This study used Traditional Authority (TA) Nkaya in Balaka district as a model.

1.3. Main and specific objectives

The main objective of this research is to assess the impact of food aid dependence on food security in TA Nkaya in Balaka. Specific objectives are as follows:

i. To investigate household capacity regarding food security.
ii. To investigate governmental and non-governmental organizations' approaches in the management of food security.
iii. To determine factors for food aid dependency impact on food security.

1.4. Research questions

The study will answer the following questions:

i. What are the household capacity regarding food security?
ii. What approaches are available in the management of food security by governmental and non-governmental organizations apart from food aid?
iii. What are the factors for food aid dependence impacts on food security?

1.5. Significance of the study

Ensuring food security involves reducing people's vulnerability to the hazardous effects of food scarcity while maintaining or creating greater capacities and resilience of communities through various food insecurity recovery and prevention and mitigation approaches to prevent or better respond to a food crisis. The second Goal and target of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the 2030 agenda is to end hunger. However, the food insecurity phenomenon is increasing although food aid is distributed. Researches have been conducted on the causes of food insecurity but the contributions of food aid dependency to the increasing food insecurity have not been given attention. Therefore, it is a dire need to conduct a study to figure out how food aid has affected food security. The data

collected in this study will help increase literature on food aid dependence impacts on food security for organizations in food security management create sound programs that address food insecurity root causes to build the community back better and promote food availability, accessibility and nutrition.

2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Food security situation.

Food is the most basic of human needs for survival, health, and productivity. It is thus the foundation for human and economic development (Smith et al., 2006). It is for this reason that food security must be put into consideration in the country's development plan. Malawi's food security is generally defined in terms of adequate production of and access to maize, the country's staple crop (Makombe et al., 2010). Achieving food security is one of the high goals of a Malawi government and Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) recognizes food security as a centre for sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. However, for the past decade, Malawi was hit by food shortages for several lean seasons. For example, 2016/17 lean season, Malawi faced an unprecedented food crisis due to the drought of the 2015-2016 cropping season in southern and central Malawi that reduced crop production and made a large portion of Malawi's population vulnerable to food insecurity (Babu et al., 2018). It clearly shows that 2017/2018 season food insecurity conditions were a continuum of those in its previous season as the third round of crop estimates assessment by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development indicated a maize production of 2,697,959 metric tons, 28.4% drop from 3,464,139 metric tons of 2016/2017 growing season.

The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) reported 2,833,212 food insecure people in 2015, 1,043,000 in 2017 in rural areas alone and 3,306, 405 people in 2018 as being in Phase 3 of the IPC food security assessment. Recently, the 2019-2020 IPC acute food insecurity analysis indicated 673,000 people are estimated to be in acute food insecurity Phase 3. The report estimated three districts were to be in Phase 3 (Crisis) during the period October 2019 – March 2020 which include Balaka, Neno and Nsanje. The population in Phase 3 and above during this period was projected to be 1,063,000 representing 7% of the total rural population. This is the reason this study will use the case of Balaka as a model.

Food insecurity in Balaka is mostly caused by floods, dry spells, the infestation of fall armyworms, stormy rains and high prices of staple food (Kamasumbi-chirwa, 2017). Menon, 2007 outlines the causes of food insecurity such as the combination of heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture and increasing frequency of natural hazards. Food aid

dependency during food crises both by humanitarian organizations and beneficiaries has also increased food insecurity in Malawi (Madziakapita, 2008). However, Madziakapita did not in detail explain how food aid dependence contributes to food insecurity in Malawi.

2.2. Food aid and food security

Different humanitarian organizations and agencies define food aid in various ways but collectively carry one idea. Food aid is looked at as food assistance during a food crisis and a tool to fund general development from donors (Actionaid, 2003). The world food program refers food aid as a set of instruments used to provide food needs of vulnerable people (WFP, 2009). There are three main categories of food aid that have been used in Malawi by different organizations. These are:

Program food aid

The government in the form of loans or grants, mainly to supply the country's balance of payments and to provide budgetary support (a substitute for commercial food imports) (Jere, 2007). This is targeted and freely distributed to victims of natural and man-made disasters. It is either donated or sold at a concessional price to the government of a recipient which sells the food on the market (FAO, 2005).

Project food aid

This is provided in the form of grants to support specific development objectives and groups of beneficiaries and is normally not provided directly to the government but to the agency that is implementing the project (Jere, 2007).

Relief food aid

This is provided in the form of grants and distributed to targeted groups of beneficiaries to address their critical food needs. If targeting requirements are not properly met, relief food aid has the potential to severely distort markets and create dependency (Jere, 2007).

Actionaid also categorizes food aid into three, namely relief food aid, program food aid and project food aid(Actionaid, 2003) while the Red Cross and Red Crescent categorize food aid into cash grants, cash for work and vouchers (Red Cross Red Crescent, 2006). In response to the food crisis in 2002, WFP along with its NGO implementing partners

distributed food aid across the country under the Joint Emergency Food Aid Program (JEFAP) about 237,000 MT of food of which, about 182,000 MT was maize and maize meal including pulses, milk, and vegetable oil (MVAC, 2003).

For close to ten years now, Malawi has been supporting an average of about 1.8 million people each year with emergency food assistance (Malawi government, 2018). According to the food insecurity situation that has hit Malawi for years, it is a dire need to engage food aid to mitigate and alleviate the impacts of food shortage. Malawi through various organizations provides food aid to food insecurity vulnerable people in the country including Balaka district through various programs (Makombe et al., 2010). The assessment by the MVAC in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 shows that 84,947, 83,294, 66,036 and 77,805 people respectively in Balaka were in crisis of food shortages and needed immediate food aid for four months (MVAC, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). During these periods maize, pulses, vegetable oils and cereals were distributed to affected people.

2.3. Food aid dependency.

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement support cash and vouchers as good practices of food aid. State of food and agriculture (2006), research evaluated the concept of food aid dependency and answers questions around food aid dependency by both beneficiaries and organizations which finally backs food aid as not a cause for food aid dependency syndrome. The author writes that the amount of food that is distributed is small for one to depend on it and the fallacy of food aid dependency comes in due to miss targeting of beneficiaries of food aid.

Zeweld (2013), evaluated the relationship of food aid to domestic food production and employment. He explains that food aid has undermined incentives to domestic food production as Food-For-Work (FFW) has harmed local production and has motivated households to reallocate their labour away from production towards FFW. Thus, food aid has created a disincentive effect and discouraged farmers to supply more. He continued to say, food aid disincentive effect of food aid on labour supply exists but mainly remains in the agriculture sector. Households that received food aid for two consecutive years have a higher probability of dependency syndrome than households that received less than two years or didn't receive it at all. Madziakapita, (2008) found that food aid dependence has increased in Malawi among food insecure populations and organizations. The increase of

food beneficiaries per year, the low production of food by food beneficiaries, the small number of funds allocated by the government for food security management, the insufficient attention to root causes of food insecurity and the high amount of funds used for food aid provide evidence that food aid dependency has an impact on food security conditions in Malawi. Unintended consequences of food aid such as household labour disincentives which have encouraged laziness, lowered production, changed consumption patterns and community-level moral hazard (Barrett et al., 2006). As indicated in the Malawi disaster risk management policy that recovery is often ignored during the implementation process and there is no systematic monitoring of recovery interventions and both disaster response and recovery miss the opportunity to integrate essential elements of DRR, therefore, it is this reason factors leading to food aid dependency impacts on food security need to be evaluated to find ways to effectively use food aid in food security management.

2.4. Policy frameworks for food aid and food security in Malawi

Malawi has no specific policy that governs food aid. However, there are several policy frameworks and strategies that support food aid as an immediate way to food crisis. These policies indicate that food aid should also help address food insecurity through long-term methods.

i. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction – 2015-2030

Since food security in Malawi is mostly affected by climatic hazards, it is important to involve both the national and local communities in preparing for disasters to ensure sustainable food security management. The fourth priority of the SFDRR 2015-2030 is to enhance disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction (United Nations, 2015). Disasters have demonstrated that the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, which needs to be prepared ahead of a disaster, is a critical opportunity to "Build Back Better", including through integrating disaster risk reduction into development measures, making nations and communities resilient to disasters.

ii. The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III

The MGDS III acknowledges that Malawi continues to face food insecurity. Low food availability due to low levels of agricultural production and restricted access to food due

to poorly functioning maize markets, low-income levels and poor road infrastructure limits food security. These constraints have made Malawi dependant on food aid. Some of the key strategies that it has identified to address the food insecurity problem include:

- improving agricultural productivity.
- implementing policies to improve the functioning of maize markets.
- improving the country's ability to import and distribute food through better domestic and regional connectivity.
- creating access to food from external markets.
- providing the poor with the means to gain an income.
- establishing effective safety net programs for the most vulnerable.

iii. The sustainable development goals

To end hunger to achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture is one of the goals of the SDGs (United Nations, 2015). By 2030, the framework targets to ensure access by all people, end all forms of malnutrition and double the agricultural productivity just to mention a few.

iv. The National Food Security Policy, 2006

Food aid is prioritized in the policy coordinated approach to the planning and management of food aid and commercial imports (Jere, 2007). A key objective of the policy is to 'ensure availability of food in sufficient quantities, adequate quality and variety through production, purchase, trade and donations to meet the demands of all Malawians at all times (Malawi Government, 2006).

2.5. Learning from others

There exist several unverified anecdotes suggesting that communities alter their collective behaviour in the presence of food assistance. For example, in Afghanistan, some communities stopped maintenance on public facilities in anticipation of food aid payments, food for work (FFW) for the same projects. Similarly, in Ethiopia, people planted trees upside down as part of an FFW scheme, allegedly to encourage the ongoing delivery of food aid (Barrett et al., 2006).

3. CHAPTER THREE: STUDY METHODOLOGIES.

3.1. Research design

3.1.1. Study area

The study was conducted in Traditional Authority Nkaya in Balaka, situated in Southern Malawi (Fig. 1). The district covers an area of 2,193km^2 representing 2.4% of the total land area of Malawi. It is the 20th largest district in the country and the seventh-largest in the Southern Region and is located in latitude 14^0 59'15.38"S longitude 34^0 57'22.23"E (Kamasumbi-chirwa, 2017). It has a population approximation of 438,379 increasing at a rate of 3.2 percent per annum (Malawi NSO, 2019). The district has ten Traditional Authorities (TAs): Amidu, Chanthunya, Kachenga, Kalembo, Nkaya, Nsamala, Sawali, Phalula, Toleza, and Matola (Balaka Contingency Plan, 2016). Nkaya, located to the south of the district, constitutes 18 Group Village Headmen (GVM) and has a total area of approximately 786.63 km2 (Kamasumbi-chirwa, 2017).

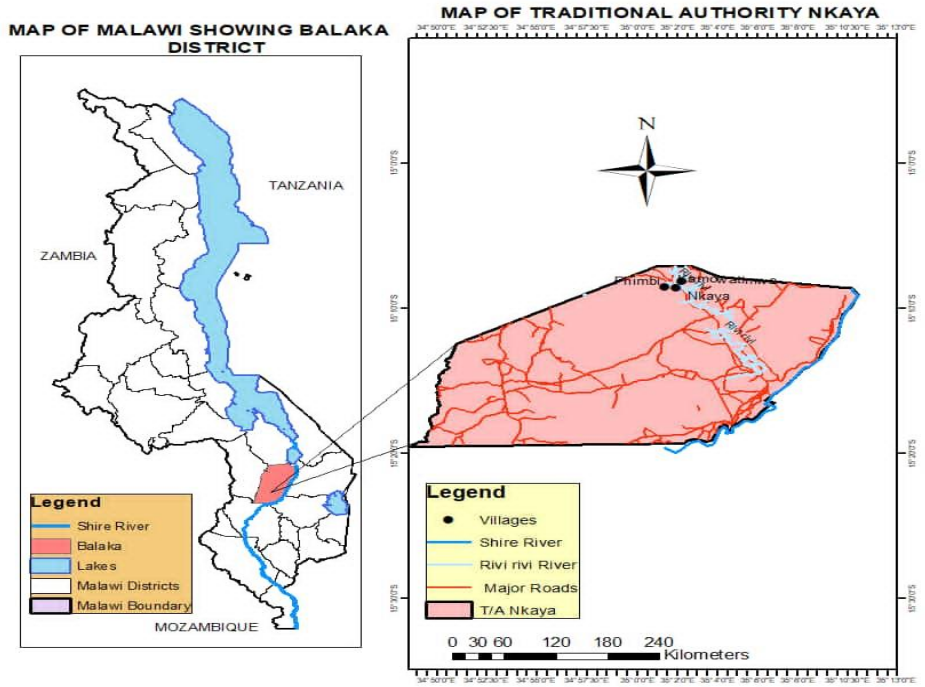


Figure 1: Map of the study area (TA Nkaya)

PaMawa MERL TEAM (2018), through the analysis of resilience in communities conducted in Balaka, shows that TA Nkaya commonly experiences food insecurity, floods, erosion along rivers, and prolonged dry spells. The assessment rated the area to have low resilience to disasters including food shortages. As a result, the area frequently receives food aid almost every year. TA Nkaya is assisted by quite more organizations in times of food crises such as Red Cross, World Food Program (WFP), Project Concern International (PCI), United Purpose (UP), World Vision Malawi. In addition to that, the government of Malawi through the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) registers high food insecure population percent as compared to other food-insecure areas in the district. Evaluation of food aid dependency impact on food security management is required in this area to help link food aid with short, medium and long-term sustainable recovery to build back better the area in terms of food security.

3.1.2. Study design

The research employs a qualitative type of research. The main focus of qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover, and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people. This study uses a case study as a research method. The case study is an empirical research method used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon, focusing on the dynamics of an event, within its real-life context (Teegavarapu & Summers, 2014). The case study is used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. Case studies are often accused of lack of rigor as the case study investigator has been sloppy, and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions. To solve the problem, a multiple-case design will be adopted with real-life events that show numerous sources of evidence through replication rather than sampling logic (Zainal, 2007). This helps raise the level of confidence in the robustness of the method.

3.2. Population and sample size

The study population consisted of food aid beneficiaries and practitioners in the food security cluster targeting managers of food aid. Purposive sampling was used for practitioners of food aid and food security as key informants. A simple random sampling technique to select three GVH that benefit food aid in TA Nkaya area was used. The group villages selected were Nkaya, Kamowatimwa and Phimbi for Focus Group Discussions

(FGD) with VCPCs. Thereafter, from the food aid beneficiary's population, systematic sampling was used to get a household sample population of food aid beneficiaries where data was collected through a household survey. The sample size was calculated using Daniel and Cochran formula:

$$n = \frac{Z2\ P(1-P)}{e2}$$

Where **n** is the sample size; **Z** is the value of a normally distributed standard variate which for a 90% confidence interval takes on the value of 1.645. **P** is the proportion of the participants with the attribute understudy out of the total population in that area. Since the proportion of the population is unknown, 0.5 as a value for P was used. 0.12 (12%) was used as the allowable error (**e**) or the desired level of accuracy.

Calculation of sample size:

$n = [1.645^2(0.5)(1 - 0.5)]/0.12^2$

$n = [(1.367858)(0.5)]/0.0144$

$n = 0.683929/0.0144$

n = 47 households.

Since food aid beneficiaries' population was found small per GVH, that is 78 households, then the sample size was reduced slightly. This is because a given sample size provides proportionately more information for a small population than for a large population (Israel, 2003). The initial sample size **(n_0)** was adjusted using the following equation:

$$n = n_o / [1 + (n_o - 1) / N]$$

Where **n** is the sample size and **N** is the population size.

Calculations:

$n = 47/[1 + (47-1)/78]$

$n = 47/1.59$

n = 30 households

In sum, the total number of households that were involved in this study was 90, each GVH contributing 30 households.

3.3. Materials and data collection methods

Research collecting tools were used when undertaking the preliminary studies to facilitate the subjective analysis of the qualitative data. Both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data is the information gathered using the first approach whereas the sources used in the second approach are called secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires in FGD and interviews. A questionnaire is a written list of questions in which the answers are recorded by respondents (Bird, 2009). However, the disadvantage of a questionnaire is the limited application due to some respondents that cannot read and write (Bird, 2009). To solve the problem, face-to-face interviews were utilized. An interview involves an interviewer reading questions to respondents and recording their answers. An interview is a verbal interchange, often face to face, though the telephone may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person considered to be particularly knowledgeable about the topic. The advantage of using interviews as a method is that it allows respondents to raise issues that the interviewer may not have expected (Jilcha, 2019). Interviews were conducted with the key informants who have information about food aid and food security of the study area. To collect secondary data, the research utilized the review of literature, reports by food aid practitioners that is a governmental and non-governmental organization and articles through the office desk method.

3.4. Data analysis

A qualitative method has been employed to analyze the data. The data has been analysed based on responses given by respondents with references to the humanitarian standards and policies on food aid and food security. The main parameters have been analysed using Excel and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). These parameters which will be derived from the analysis of the data are the perceptions of the food aid beneficiaries on the purpose of food assistance and coping capacities to food insecurity. Key informants' interview responses have also been analysed to draw the approaches to food security management.

3.5. Ethical considerations

The level of attention on ethical conduct has both increased and broadened in response to society's expectation of greater accountability. At many educational institutions, collecting data from human participants for research purposes without ethical approval would place the researcher outside the institutions' Staff Code of Conduct (Fleming and Zegwaard, 2018). Human rights and dignity consideration of respondents was highly put into account to make sure that participants were not in any way harmed or abused. According to the Malawi University of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee (MUSTREC), consent was taken from the Disaster Reduction and Relief Office, key informants and all participants. During the interviews, the participants were treated with respect and dignity. At any point in the study process, respondents had the right to quit participating in the study upon their decision to ensure that their participation was completely **voluntary.** They were given chance to ask or comment wherever they feel abused or report to the MUSTREC for assistance. Participants were assured of privacy and whatever they contribute to be treated with total confidentiality. All the information collected was anonymous and no names were attached to any questionnaire or quoted in the report.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section outlines the findings of the study and the description of the results which gives the interpretation of the main findings. The data that was collected was analysed using excel and SPSS version 25 software following the objectives of the study. Through this software, data were presented in tables and graphs. Interviews with key informants and FGD with VCPCs provided data that was analysed through the thematic method. In thematic analysis, transcripts were closely examined to identify common themes-topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly.

4.1. Household information

4.1.1. Household head

A household head is an adult person, male or female, who is responsible for the organization and care of the family, or who is regarded as such by the members of the family. The study shows that out of the 90 households surveyed, 37 were headed by fathers, 39 by mothers, 13 by grandparents and 1 by a child. It shows that in TA Nkaya area 43.3% of households are looked after by mothers seconded by fathers which represent by 41.1% and 14.4% of the households are headed by grandparents while 1.1% by children. This shows that a great number of households in TA Nkaya is headed by mothers. Table 1 below shows frequencies and percentages of household heads.

Table 1: Household head.

Household head	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Father	37	41.1	41.1	41.1
Mother	39	43.3	43.3	84.4
Grandparent	13	14.4	14.4	98.9
Child	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

4.1.2. Gender of household head

The results of the study indicate that more females take a role of the household head than males in TA Nkaya. Out of the 90 households that participated in the survey, 49

households are headed by females representing 54.4% and 41 households are headed by males representing 45.6%. This is in contrary to the general cultural believes in Malawi where males are subjected to be the heads of a family at all cost. The result provides an added advantage as to the objectives of this research. Table 2 below displays the frequency and percent of household gender.

Table 2: Gender of household head

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	41	45.6	45.6	45.6
Female	49	54.4	54.4	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

4.1.3. Level of education of household head

The results of the survey show that out of the 90 households, 50 households are headed by individuals that have no formal education representing 55.6%. 25 households are headed by PLSCE holders representing 27.8% while 15 households are headed by MSCE holders. It is noted that no household head of food aid beneficiary has attended a high education. It is clear to say that food aid beneficiaries in TA Nkaya has low literacy levels which harm understanding, decision making and problem-solving concerning things that affect their livelihood. Below is table 3 provides a summary of level of education of household heads in TA Nkaya area.

Table 3: Household head education levels

Level of education	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not attended	50	55.6	55.6	55.6
PLSCE	25	27.8	27.8	83.3
MSCE	15	16.6	16.6	100.0

Since formal education provides an opportunity for one to secure an employed job, one cannot wonder why a great number of food aid beneficiary's household heads are unemployed in TA Nkaya area due to their low education levels as earlier outlined above.

The results indicate that only 17.19% of food beneficiaries' household heads are employed and the rest unemployed. Figure 2 below shows the percentage of household head employment status.

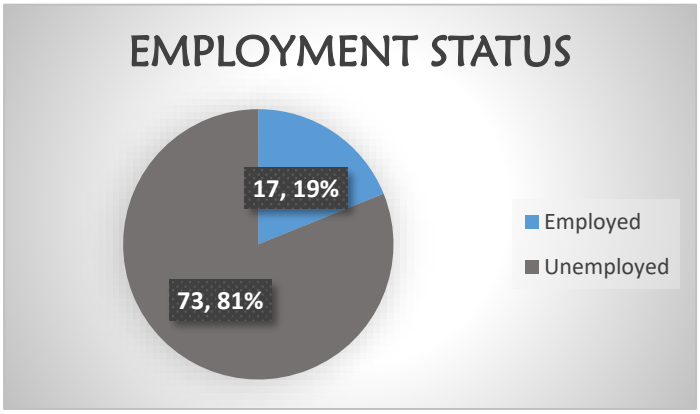


Figure 2: Household head employment status

4.1.4. Household source of food

Food security in Malawi, as defined earlier in this paper, is generally the adequate production of, and access to maize, the country's staple crop. Through the analysis of the data, all food aid beneficiaries in TA Nkaya rely on maize as their daily basic food. 59 of the households surveyed grow their food which represents 65.6%. 25 rely on food through buying and growing representing 27.8% while 6 households which is only 6.7% rely on food through growing, buying and aid. Figure 3 is the percentages of household sources of food in the area.

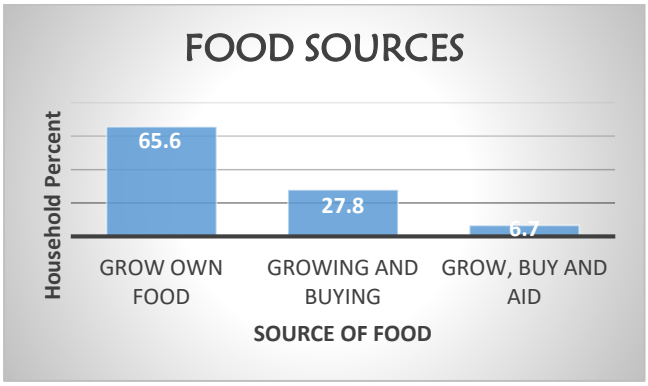


Figure 3: Household source of food.

It is noted from the results that 97.8% of the households have gardens, however, only 14.4% of them manage to harvest food enough for the whole year while 36.6% harvest

food enough for 6 months, 40.0% harvest food enough for 4 months and 10% harvest food that does not even last for a month. The graph below shows the abundance of food that food aid beneficiaries households harvest per year.

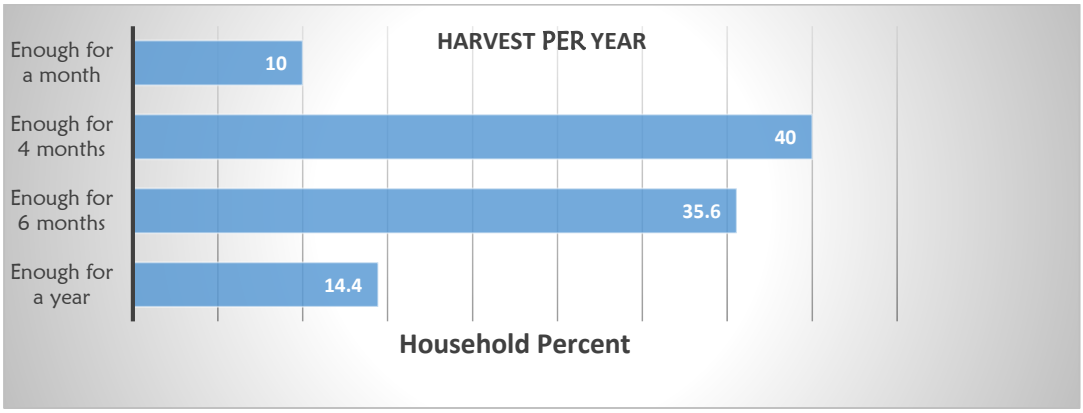


Figure 4: Household food harvest per year.

The households that harvest little to sustain themselves for the whole year get the remaining food through buying and aid. However, results show that 84.4% of the food aid beneficiaries' households earn less than 20,000 Malawi kwacha not enough to support their big families which most have six members on average. Below is a table showing the household income of aid beneficiaries in TA Nkaya.

Table 4: Household income

Income per months	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than K5,000	11	12.2	12.2	12.2
K6,000 - K10,000	24	26.7	26.7	38.9
K11,000 - K20,000	41	45.6	45.6	84.4
K21,000 - K35,000	4	4.4	4.4	88.9
More than K35,000	10	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

In addition, it is indicated that 58.9% of these households spend more than 81% of their monthly income on food. The implication is that households that use high percent of their income cannot afford to save. This means that more than half of the population are

vulnerable to negative impacts of food insecurity as they do not save money to be used during a food crisis. Below is a figure showing the percent expenditure of income on food by food aid beneficiaries' households.

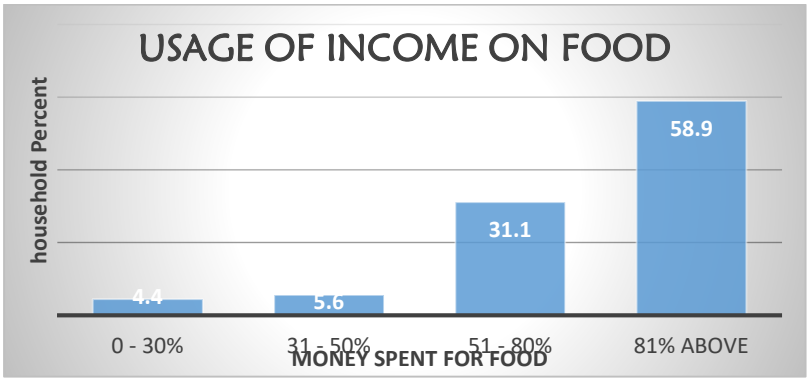


Figure 5: Percent usage of income on food.

4.1.5. Household source of income

In TA Nkaya, 67.9% of households get their income through ganyu (peace works), this is an indication of the lack of diversity in the way people get money and low levels of education of the household heads which limit them to secure a permanent job. It is found that 14,4% of the households get income through the selling of crops, 8.9% through animal selling, 4.4% small-scale businesses and 4.4% get money from their relatives. It is clear to say that lack of peace works in the area may lead to great problems in terms of food security as people may have no alternatives of finding food due to lack of money. Figure 6 below displays household sources of income frequencies and percentages.

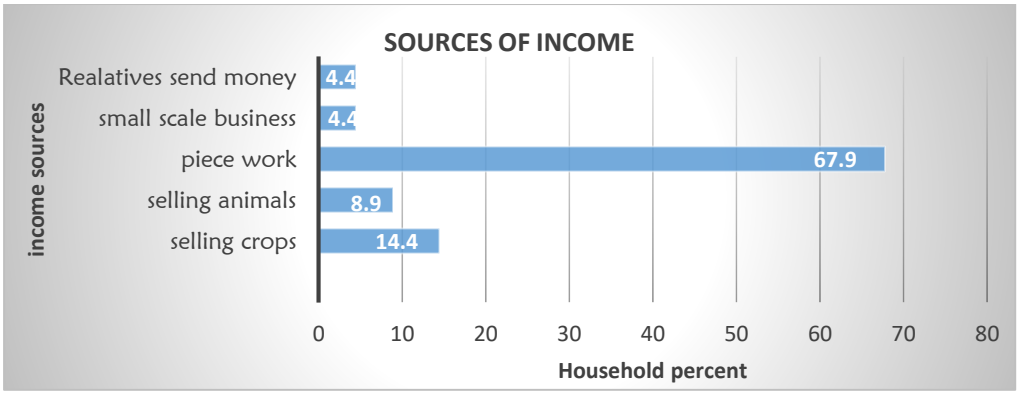


Figure 6: Household sources of income

4.2. Household capacity regarding food security

Food aid beneficiaries in TA Nkaya have a low capacity to cope with food insecurity. This was assessed based on factors influencing household food security status, that is whether they rear animals, conduct small-scale businesses, practice irrigation farming, employment status, monthly income and education levels as illustrated in figure 7 below.



Figure 7: Factors influencing household food security status

This survey has revealed that only 40% of the households rear farm animals. Besides that, of the households that rear farm animals most rear only a few chickens which are insufficient in case of food shortages. Animal rearing saves as insurance that can be used during a food crisis. Victims may sell these animals to buy food that can sustain their families. Due to little focus on rearing farm animals, it is direct that food aid beneficiaries have little capacity to cope with food insecurity.

It is also observed that though the area is supplied with fresh water good for irrigation practices, through Shire and Rivi-Rivi river, only 18 households out of 90 representing 20% practice irrigation farming. Since the area receives little rains that farmers harvest little food, it is important to supplement the remaining food with irrigation to build coping capacities to food insecurity. Chairperson of ACPC in Nkaya said in an interview:

> "anthu kuno ndiwolimbikira chifukwa amafuna kuzidalira pawokha, ena amachita ulimi wothirira koma vuto ndizipangizo, atati aboma apereka zipangizo zothiririra kuno ndalama za chakudya amagawazi sitingazidalireso…… koma nanga titani?

> Azitipatsabe ndalamazo basi" (people here work hard to rely on their own, some practice irrigation but the problem is equipment. If the government helps us with irrigation tools, we cannot rely on food aid. But we have nothing to do, we rely on aid).

Only 2% of the total land area of Balaka district is potential for irrigation and only 0.8% of the district's total land area is being utilized for irrigation (Balaka District Council, 2020). In an interview, the District Agriculture Development Officer (DADO) of Balaka district said that irrigation in TA Nkaya is not fully intensified through the Shire river is close to the area. The officer agreed that little is being done in terms of irrigation which reduces the capacity of families against food shortages caused by dry spells and fall armyworms. Over-dependency on farming especially rain-fed agriculture as a major source of household income is increasing the district's vulnerability to food insecurity (Balaka District Council, 2020).

In terms of businesses, it is discovered that only 25.6% of households conduct small-scale businesses which supplement their sources of income used to buy food in time of food crisis. Others said that they become completely stranded when hit by food shortages.

As portrayed by the results in the survey, 55.6% of the household heads did not attend education while 27.8% have PLSCE (see table 3). Level of education institutes a level of understanding of the world around us. The things that most affect a person's life can be well decided upon if one is educated or reached a high education level. It also denotes the type of information one has and the capability of making sound decisions to solve problems. In this case, it shows that capacity in terms of knowledge to food aid insecurity in the household with low education levels is minimal and is likely to suffer during a food crisis. The results show that little attention is being given to sensitization about building coping capacities to food insecurity. it is noted that only 10 out of 90 participants said they received informal education on food security management in the face of hazards that affect food production, nutrition and accessibility. Out of those 10, 7 participants got the education a long time ago of which some cannot work now due to continuous change of hazards affecting food security. 80 participants representing 88.9%, have not received any informal education on food security. See table 5 below.

Table 5: Sensitization on food production and caring

Sensitization	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	3	3.3	3.3	3.3
No	80	88.9	88.9	92.2
Long ago	7	7.8	7.8	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Most households that receive food aid have little knowledge on coping with food insecurity in the face of dry spells and fall armyworms they experience in the area. The ACPC and VCPCs said that since they assumed positions in the committee they have never received training on how they are going to do their responsibilities. One of the VCPC chairperson said:

> "….. akakhala maphunziro akagwiridwe ka ntchito yathuyi nde mpaka lero sitinalandireko, tikungoziyendera basi. Chomwe timaziwa ndikulemba mayina a anthu azolandiralandira basi….. even report kapena proposal sitimazidziwa..... nde pamenepa tikapande kudalira food aid?" (we have not even received trainings on how we are to do our roles in the committee, we are just working anyhow. What we know is to write the names of food aid beneficiaries. We do not know how to write a report or proposal. So with this situation, can we not rely on food aid?)

Based on employment, only 81.1% of the food aid beneficiaries' households are unemployed (see figure 1). The higher the unemployment rate, the lower the living wage and the more likely households are to be food insecure (Dodd and Nyabvudzi, 2017). It is not surprising to note that 67.8% of the households earn money through piece works and 84.4% earn less than 20, 000 kwacha monthly which is not enough to purchase food for their large families. Due to the high unemployment level and little income per month of the households, 77.8% of them do not save money to be used in times of food crisis which puts them at low capacity levels. It is evidence to note that 58.9% of the household spent more than 81% of their monthly income on food. Figure 6 below is a summary of the coping capacity regarding food security for food aid beneficiaries in TA Nkaya.

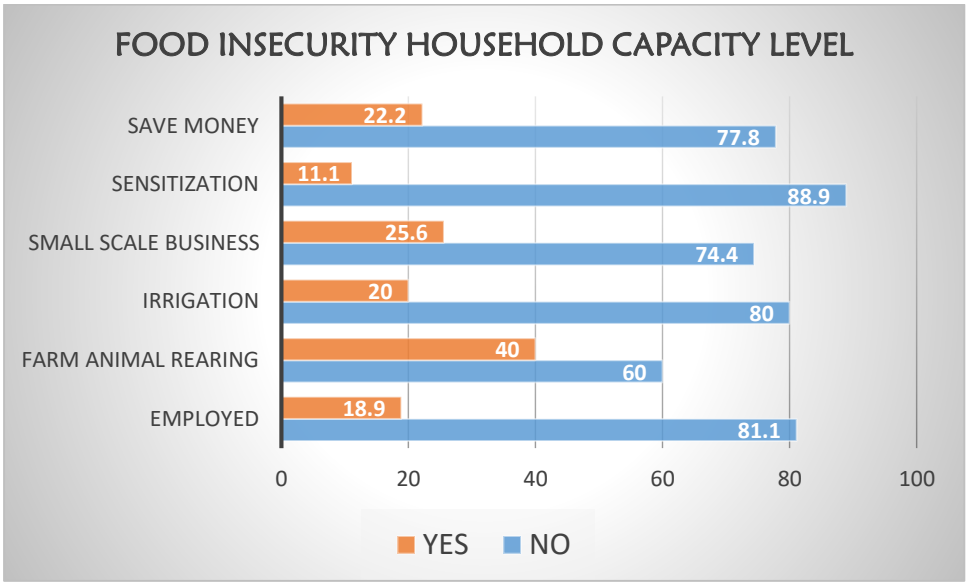


Figure 8: Household capacity regarding food security

In addition, it is noted that apart from maize, 43% of food aid beneficiaries grow potatoes and 37% grow sorghum while those who grow millet and cassava share the remaining percent. One of the VCPC members said in a Focus Group Discussion:

> "….. kulima chimanga nthawi zambiri kuno sizidalirika chifukwa chang'amba yomwe imagwa kuno, makamakaso ndi mbozi zikumagwazi sheeeee basitu disaster…… nde tikaona choncho next time anthu amalimaso mbatata ndi mapira zochepa chabe kuti mwina ana asafe ndi njala…. Komabe sizikwana" (growing maize here is most times unreliable due to dry spells and fall armyworms that we experience, therefore we opt to grow potatoes and sorghum in the next season for our children to have food but it is not enough).

Below is a figure showing different crops grown in TA Nkaya other than maize, their staple food.

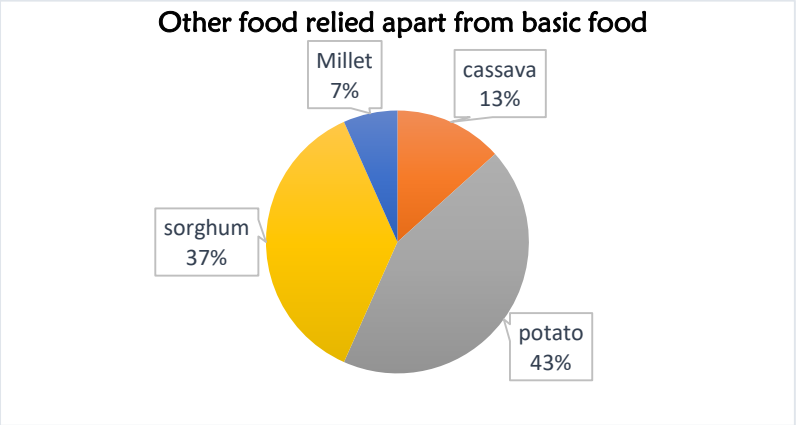


Figure 9: Other food apart from maize

The DADO, said the area relies on rain-fed agriculture. However, the food produced is not enough due to dry spells and fall armyworms, therefore, the area relies on food that is supplied from outside through informal markets since there are no formal markets such as ADMARC to provide easy access to food. Things become worse with the low income that households get in the area. It shows there are challenges in the area in terms of food access contrary to MGDS III key strategies of ensuring access to food from markets and providing the poor with the means to gain an income.

4.3. Governmental and non-governmental organizations' approaches in the management of food security

TA Nkaya area is being assisted in terms of food security by several organizations. According to the ACPC chairperson and VCPCs focus group discussion, the area is assisted by the government, United Purpose, Emmanuel International, Blantyre Synod, Malawi Red Cross, World Vision Malawi, Find Your Feet and World Food Program. Through thematic analysis, it noted that various approaches are used to curb food insecurity in the area. The major three approaches noted are the use of food production approaches, food nutrition approaches, and resilience-building approaches. All these approaches are being implemented based on promoting food security components which are the availability of food, access to nutritious food and utilization of food.

i. Food production approaches

Investments in agricultural inputs increase food production that improves food security especially for agricultural communities such as TA Nkaya area. The Malawi Red Cross

distributes farm inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to farmers for irrigation farming just after the rain season. It is also distributing tree seedlings to be planted in bare land to mitigate the problems of climate change which affects Balaka district in terms of rainfall distribution. In addition to that, the United Purpose implemented a DIVERSIFY project in 2017 that ended in 2020. The purpose of the project was to solve problems of food shortages through crop diversification and to solve problems of food nutrition and food accessibility. Farmers were introduced to new varieties of potatoes that mature early and provide high yield.

ii. Food nutrition approaches

Improving food security does not necessarily improve nutrition. Efforts to alleviate malnutrition have been coordinated with developments in sanitation, clean water, and health services. World Vision Malawi is promoting access to portable water through boreholes. Families are sensitized on the production of nutritious food value addition instead of relying on Maize, the staple food, of which its production is mostly affected by dry spells. Food items are also distributed in times of crisis.

> "During food crisis, the area used to be supported by food aid which comprised 50kg of maize, 10kg purse of legumes and 2 litres of cooking oil per household. Currently, the WFP and FYF is using cash transfer method to assist the food insecure households to buy food for themselves" (Balaka DRRO)

iii. Resilience building approaches

Building resilience is key to decreasing the need for food aid. Systems such as crop insurance and employment guarantee strengthening communities and reduce vulnerability. However, the projects are less effective since there is no great progress in building resilience in the area for food shortages. Though food aid does not solve long-term solutions to food insecurity, and integration with long-term methods during early recovery activities to build back better the area is required. In commenting on the progress of the cash transfer method, one of the VCPC said:

> "…. amalandira ndalama yokwana 23,100 kwacha yomwe ndiyosakwana, kuphatikiza apo amalandiraso mochedwa zinthu zitativuta kale….." (people

> receive 23,100 kwacha which is not enough, in addition, they receive the money very late when the situation is already bad)

The intended purpose of food aid is to save lives from food insecurity impacts. Late distribution of food aid causes food aid purpose not being achieved as people spend more time searching for food through ganyu instead of working in their fields if they were given aid in time.

> "…. Ndine othokoza kuti amatipatsa zakudya komaso ma project osiyanasiyana. Koma ma program onsewa akatha palibe chomwe ndizaloze kuti ndapindulapo…." (I am thankful that I receive this support. But when this program ends I will not have anything and there will be nothing that I can point to show that I was being supported by that program) (food aid beneficiary household head)

It is noted that many projects have been implemented and phased out but beneficiaries are left with nothing to support them do what they have learned to build resilience to food insecurity on their own. Tree planting programs though implemented but are not enforced. A lot of tree seedlings are left unplanted which makes its objective not achieved.

4.4. Factors for food aid dependency impact on food security

From the analysis of household information on food insecurity and their coping capacity strategies including the analysis of the approaches by government and non-governmental organizations on food security management, factors for food aid dependency impact on food security in the area are drawn.

Firstly, lack of gender mainstreaming into food security management has contributed to food aid dependency impact on food security. As outlined earlier that more than half (54.4%) of households in the area are headed by women. This is an indication that government and non-governmental approaches do not take on board women's concerns in food production and income-generating activities so they can have enough food for their families. Generally, Enarson and Meyreles (2004), found that vulnerability to disasters differs between men and women, women tend to be more affected by disasters than men. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), developed by IFPRI attempts to collate multiple angles of women's empowerment as it relates to productive realms of women's empowerment (IFPRI 2012). Forgetting women's concerns leads to

failure in food security management. For example, women are not provided a chance to conduct income-generating activities such as businesses. Instead, women opt to depend on aid since they have no capacity for food insecurity. Fundamentally, women should be empowered through all empowerment dimensions such as economic, material, social, education and occupation.

> "……azimayi amagonedwa usiku powanamiza kuti apatsidwa ufa, pofuna kuti adyetse ana awo amavomera……. Akadzuka mamawa amapeza kuti ndi phulusa osati ufa…." (women are being sexually abused in exchange for cooking flour when it is morning they realize it is ashes, not flour as agreed). (VCPC member)

Secondly, wrong targeting of food aid beneficiaries. From the analysis of the annual household harvest of food aid beneficiaries, it is discovered that 10% of aid beneficiaries harvest food enough for the whole year (see fig. 3) as such are not qualified for it. It shows that the whole purpose of food aid is not put into consideration. Therefore, food aid is not regarded as a saving strategy for food-insecure households but a supplement strategy that can be depended upon by capable households. It is not surprising to note that 10% as well of the surveyed beneficiaries' households spend less than 50% of their income on food (see fig. 4). This is an indication that these households have enough food for the whole year and can afford to save money to be used in case of a food crisis and need no food aid as they are less likely to be affected by a food crisis. In a Focus Group Discussion, VCPCs blamed the UBR method of recruiting food aid beneficiaries. They said the UBR appears to centralize information on a platform accessible to those involved in distribution rather than to intended recipients.

> "…….mukaundula mumapezeka anthu oti anamwalira, kapena pabanja kumalembedwa anthu angapo……. enaso ali ndikuthekera koma amalandira ndithu…. tikatumiza mayina atsopano palibe chomwe chimasintha…… zoopsatu kwambiri" (registers have dead people names, some households register more than one member, some have capacity yet they still receive. When we send new name list nothing changes, so surprising) (VCPC chairperson).

When officials that manage UBR were asked in an interview, agreed with the VCPC chairperson's complaint that there are some problems but they are trying to change

targeting criteria where there will be rotation in food aid beneficiaries to avoid aid dependency.

Next is the lack of community participatory needs assessment is another factor for food aid dependency impact on food security. It is discovered that government and non-government organizations do not fully engage the community in the needs assessment of their community. Projects that do not fully address the communities' problems are implemented, as a result, objectives are not achieved. Food aid beneficiaries said that organizations do not ask them what they need in their community for them to have enough food for the whole year. Disregarding community participatory assessment reduces ownership of the project by the community members as a result root causes of food insecurity are left unaddressed making people depend on food aid. An investigation has revealed that food aid beneficiaries' capacity building by organizations is not paid attention as indicated by low capacity levels to food insecurity (see figure 6).

In addition, poor governance on food aid and disaster risks has as well contributed to food aid dependency negative impact on food security. According to Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act of 1991, institutional arrangements concerning disaster risk management are formulated. The presence of DCPC, ACPC and VCPCs is the evidence. However, there is lack of knowledge of how ACPC and VCPCs are to do their roles since they are not given training. Since the ACPC and VCPCs assumed position, training has not yet been given for them to perform in line with their roles. Knowledge of the instruments that govern disaster risk management needs to be instilled including their emphasized priorities need to be sensitized. For example, the DRMP, NRS, SDG, and the MDGS III. These institutions also lack good communication coordination among them. It is observed that reports from VCPCs do not effectively reach the DCPC through the ACPC. One of the members of VCPCs in the area suggested if there could be a coordinator who is to link all committees in terms of communication.

> "….. tikatumiza ma report a zomwe tikufuna kapena tachita samakafika kwa abwana kubomako….. tikupempha pakanakhala wina woti azitilumikizitsa ma committee onse atatu kuyambira ku boma, pa area ndikuno kumudzi……" (the reports we send does not reach the DCPC, we suggest if there could be a coordinator to link us in communication issues) (VCPCs member)

> "…. Kubwera kwanu kwatilimbikitsa, timkati kodi mavuto athuwa tidzauza ndani? Chonde mukatinenere……." (your visit has encouraged us, we were stranded of who to tell our problems… please take our grievances) (VCPC secretary)

It is noted that at the district level, there is no Disaster Risk Management Plan formulated to help the institution proactively manage disasters. This indicates that all activities concerning disasters are done in an ad hoc manner. In the food insecurity scenario, this is an indication that food aid is dependent to contain the situation rather than prevention and mitigation measures to increase availability, accessibility, and nutrition of food.

Lack of awareness to food aid beneficiaries is also another factors for food aid dependency impact on food security. The DRRO of Balaka district said in an interview that, most beneficiaries misunderstand the purpose of food aid. Instead of working hard in their fields when given aid, they remain dependant on food aid thereby resulting in low food production which increases their vulnerability to food crisis effects in the next season. ACPC chairperson and VCPCs have faulted cash transfers by FYF and WFP as it has disincentives to household income-generating measures. Most beneficiaries have stopped working hard to produce enough food since they depend on cash transfers. Village heads have lost their powers to lead their people to development works of the village since people receive money for their daily living and regard development as not important.

> "….. chifukwa cha dollar za manjalende amagawazi anthu adasiya kugwira ntchito…… ngakhale mafumu alibeso mphavu zolamula anthu kugwira chitukuko. Amati boma limawadyetsa osati mafumu…." (because of the money people receive, they stopped working. Even village heads have lost powers to tell people to work in development activities. People say the government feeds them, not chiefs) (ACPC chairperson)

5. CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

Food aid is required when the quality and quantity of available food or access to food is not sufficient to prevent excessive mortality, morbidity, or malnutrition. However, research has shown that food aid has increased dependency syndrome by both beneficiaries and food security practitioners as indicated by an increase in the number of food beneficiaries per year, the low production of food by food beneficiaries, the high amount of funds used for food aid and household labour disincentives, including changing consumption patterns, thereby increasing food insecurity. It is noted that the factors for food aid dependency impact on food security are left unchecked. This study is central to the aim of investigating household capacity regarding food security, investigating governmental and non-governmental organizations' approaches in the management of food security and determining factors for food aid dependency impact on food security.

Through interviews, Focus Group Discussion and desk study, it was found that most food aid beneficiaries' households have little capacity to deal with food insecurity. it was found that most of them are not employed and do not do any small-scale business which also encourages low monthly income of the households. Most of them have also low education levels which determine their literacy level to manage food insecurity, most are not engaged in farm animal keeping and irrigation practices.

To solve the problem of food insecurity, various approaches by the government and non-governmental organizations are engaged. These are food production approach, food nutrition approach and resilience-building approach and the activities involve are food item distribution, cash transfers, farm inputs distribution through subsidies, increasing potable water infrastructures and tree planting programs the study has found that the government and non-governmental organizations used to provide food aid in form of food items which now cash transfers are used instead. Find Your Feet organization also provides cash transfers to food-insecure households. It is also found that United Purpose implemented a DIVERSIFY project that phased out in 2020. In addition, the Malawi Red Cross is providing farm inputs such as seed, fertilizer, and pesticides to food-insecure households for irrigation. However, the study found that not enough is being done to

solve the food shortage's root causes in the area which has resulted in food aid dependency.

It was found in the study that food aid dependency's negative impact on food security has been aggravated due to several factors such as wrong targeting of food aid beneficiaries that result in the inclusion of households with capacities to food shortages, lack of community participatory need assessment resulting ineffective projects being implemented, poor governance of food aid in the face of disaster risks which promotes reactive approaches and hinder good communication among committees, and also lack of awareness to beneficiaries on the purpose of food aid. It has been observed also that gender issues are not being put into consideration since women-headed households are not given reliable income-generating methods through various projects implemented by government and non-governmental organizations.

5.2. Recommendations

The factors of food aid dependency impacts on food security indicate that there is more that needs to be done based on the sustainable development goal (SDG) of ending hunger by promoting food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. On the same, the SFDRR 2015-2030 enhances disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The MGDS III also acknowledges that Malawi continues to face food insecurity and constraints have made Malawi dependant on food aid.

Through the findings of the study, the researcher, has managed to draw the following recommendations which all food security practitioners, from the government to non-governmental organizations should embark on to solve the root causes of food aid dependency and integrate food aid with long-term strategies to build back better communities in terms of food security.

- There is a need to promote awareness and sensitization of the purpose of food aid to beneficiaries so that the whole objective of food aid is achieved. This should include education on food insecurity prevention and mitigation measures to bridge the gap created by low education levels of the food aid beneficiaries' household heads.

- The targeting method of food aid beneficiaries should take on board VCPCs suggestions to include the need aid households. This is so because the community is the best source of information on the households that are food insecure due to various shocks. It will also help to note beneficiaries who are dead and need to be removed from the registry,
- Comprehensive need assessment should be prioritized. This should involve food insecurity-affected communities and also take on board gender issues to empower women in the food security prevention, mitigation, and preparedness process. This will help organizations to implement sound projects that address communities' problems in terms of food security.
- Good governance of food security should be enhanced. As institutional arrangements for disaster risk management are in place, there is a need to promote good and effective communication among VCPCs, ACPC, and DCPC. There should a coordinator to facilitate communication among CPCs in terms of reports on disaster risk management which include food security issues. Planning should be prioritized so that management is proactive instead of waiting for a disaster.
- Since Balaka district is a prone area to dry spells, and the average land suitable for irrigation is minimal, it is recommended to encourage farm animal rearing to increase assets as capacity, and encourage small scale businesses with the advantage of railway networks connecting Balaka, Blantyre and Nayuchi via Liwonde in Machinga which provide access to markets.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: HOUSEHOLD SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of interviewer _____

Date completed _____

Name of reviewer _____

Date reviewed _____

INTERVIEWER GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that the sampling procedure has been followed before starting the interview.
2. Only the chosen household per plan should be interviewed.
3. Greet the respondent of the survey and ask if they are willing to participate.
4. Tell the respondent the time it will take and make sure they are comfortable to go with it.
5. Before commencing with the questionnaire, complete the information requested above.
6. Read the questions the way they appear in the questionnaire, without any explanation unless there is a need.
7. Do not skip any question because you think it is unnecessary unless that is what is expected.
8. Record the answers that the respondent gives rather than making up what you think the respondent is saying or what you think they should have said.
9. Many questions require one choice from different alternatives. Make sure that only one answer is marked.
10. Ensure that the respondent is not being influenced by anyone when answering the questions.
11. Ensure that all the questions are answered unless they do not apply.

12. Go through the completed questionnaire again and make sure all questions that apply have been answered.
13. Give opportunity to the respondent to ask any questions or give comments on the interview if need be.
14. Thank the respondent after the survey and assure them that their answers will be treated with all confidentiality.

Section 1 – Household information

Head of household	Father ☐ Mother ☐ Child ☐ Grandparent ☐ Others _____
Household head gender	Male ☐ Female ☐
Household head employed	Yes ☐ No ☐
Number of members	
Level of education of household head	Not attended ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary ☐

Section 2 - Food source information.

Basic daily food requirement for your household	Maize Rice Sorghum Millet Cassava Potato Other specify _____
Source of food	Grow own food ☐ Buying ☐ Growing and buying ☐ Aid ☐ Given by relative ☐ Grow, buy and aid ☐ Others_____
Do you have a garden?	Yes ☐ No ☐
Size of garden	Half acre ☐ 1 acre ☐ 2 acres ☐ 3 acres ☐ More ☐ N/A ☐
How much food do you normally harvest per year?	Enough for the whole year round ☐Enough for six months ☐ Enough for four months ☐ Not enough for a months ☐

Section 3 – Source of Income

Source of income apart from a full time job.	Selling farm produce ☐ Selling animal produce ☐ Piece work ☐ Small scale business ☐ Fishing ☐ A relative sends money ☐ Others _____
Money made per month?	Less than K2 000 ☐ K3 000 – K10 000 ☐ K11 000 – K15 000 ☐ K15 000 – K30 000 ☐ More than K30,000 ☐
Income used on food	0 - 30 percent ☐ 31 - 50 percent ☐ 51 - 80 percent ☐ Above 81 percent ☐
If yes to question above, do you have access to market to sell farm produce?	Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes; to what extent? • Full ☐ • High ☐ • Medium ☐ • Less ☐

	• Very less ☐ If No; then what are the reasons • No market ☐ • Bad road ☐ • Market very far ☐ • Others ☐ specify _____

Section 4. Food aid and food security

Do you receive food aid	Yes ☐ No ☐
What kind of food aid do you receive?	Food for work ☐ Emergency food ☐ School feeding ☐ Cash transfers ☐ Mother child nutrition ☐ Others ☐ specify _____
Agencies you receive food aid from.	The Government ☐ The church ☐ The NGOs ☐ Politicians ☐ Other ☐ Specify_____
How many years have you been receiving food aid in the last ten years?	One ☐ Two ☐ Three ☐ Four ☐ Five ☐

	More than five ☐
Since you started receiving food aid, have your food accessibility improved.	Highly ☐ Medium ☐ Less ☐ Very less ☐
When you have received food aid, what do you do to have your own enough food the following year?	Working hard at the garden ☐ Cultivating different crops ☐ Small scale businesses ☐ Irrigation farming ☐ Small businesses ☐ Rearing animals ☐ Others ☐ specify_____

Section 5. Capacities to food insecurity

Apart from basic food, other crops you rely on.	Sorghum ☐ Millet ☐ Rice ☐ Potatoes ☐ Cassava ☐ others ☐ specify _____

Do you rear farm animals?	Yes ☐ No ☐
Do you do any business	Yes ☐ No ☐
Are you in any financial saving groups	Yes ☐ No ☐
Do you do irrigation farming?	Yes ☐ No ☐
Have you ever received trainings about food security management?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Long ago ☐
What should Non/governmental organizations do for you be self-food reliant?	Irrigation projects ☐ Drought tolerant seed distribution ☐ Awareness on food security ☐ Help us business capital ☐ More food aid ☐ Others ☐ specify _____

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS PAPER.

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VILLAGE CIVIL PROTECTION COMMITTTEE (VCPC) FOCUS GROUP CONDUCTOR

1. Ensure that the sampling procedure has been followed before starting the interview.
2. Only the selected members should participate in the group discussions.
3. Book an appointment with them in advance and ensure that you have explained the purpose of the group discussions.
4. Choose a comfortable venue and make the participants feel as comfortable as possible.
5. Greet the group, introduce each participant, and re-explain the purpose of the discussion.
6. Tell the groups the estimated time it will take and make sure they are comfortable to go with it.
7. Before commencing with the discussion, complete the information of each member as required.
8. Read the questions in the local language and then let the leaders discuss; more explanations can be given if necessary.
9. Do not skip any question because you think it is unnecessary unless that is what is expected.
10. Record the answers as people discuss but be careful never to make up what you think they are saying or what you think they should have said.
11. Ensure that no member is being influenced by anyone during the discussions.
12. Give opportunity to the members to ask any questions or give comments on the topic.
13. Finish by thanking all the participants and recommend them for their openness.

GUIDING QUESTIONS OF A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Section 1: Sources of Food in the Area

1. What is the staple food in this area?
2. What are the main ways people get food in this area?
3. Do people in this area receive food aid?

Section 2: Food Aid Distribution in the Area

4. In your opinion, do you think food aid is necessary for this area? Why?
5. What are the institutions that distribute food aid in this area?
6. Is the food distributed enough to meet the population's needs?

Section 3: Food Security in the Area

7. Do you think people have enough food in this area?
8. If no, what do you think are the causes of food insecurity in the area?
9. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?

Section 4. Food security management

10. What are your roles in food security management?
11. Do you understand the purpose of food aid?
12. Do you sensitize the community on food security management?
13. What coping strategies on food insecurity do you advise the community?
14. Do you receive training on food security? How often?
15. Do you think enough is being done to alleviate problems of food shortages in this area? Why?
16. How do you work with the ACPC to reduce food insecurity?

Section 4: factors of food aid dependency impact on food security.

17. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
18. Would you encourage food distribution? Why?
19. Do you think food aid has helped to make this area resilient from food shortages? How?
20. What would you say are the factors for the impact of food aid dependency on food availability, accessibility and utilization in the area?

APPENDIX C: KEY INFORMANT PERSONAL INTERVIEW PAPER

NAME OF INTERVIEWER _____

DATE COMPLETED _____

NAME OF REVIEWER _____

DATE REVIEWED _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INTERVIEWER

1. Ensure that the sampling procedure has been followed before starting the interview.
2. Only the chosen officials per plan should be interviewed.
3. Choose and agree on the appropriate venue and time.
4. Greet the respondent of the survey and ask if they are willing to participate.
5. Tell the respondent the time it will take and make sure they are comfortable to go with it.
6. Before commencing with the questionnaire, complete the information requested above.
7. Read the questions the way they appear in the questionnaire, with an explanation if there is a need.
8. Do not skip any question because you think it is unnecessary unless that is what is expected.
9. Record the answers that the respondent gives rather than making up what you think the respondent is saying or what you think they should have said.
10. Ensure the respondent is not being influenced by anyone when answering the questions.
11. Ensure that all the questions are answered unless they do not apply.
12. Give opportunity to the respondent to ask any questions or give comments on the interview if need be.

13. Thank the respondent after the survey and assure them that their answers will be treated with all confidentiality.

Guiding Questions for _____

Section 1: Sources of food in the Area

1. What are the main ways people get food in this area?
2. Do people get enough food for the whole year in this area?
3. Do people have reliable access to food markets all year round?

Section 2: Food Aid distribution in the Area

4. Does the area receive food aid?
5. What type of food aid is distributed in the area?
6. In your opinion, do you think food aid is necessary for this area? Why?
7. What do you think is the attitude/perceptions of people towards food aid?

Section 3. Food security management

8. What are your roles in food security management?
9. Do you provide training on food security management? How often?
10. Regarding climatic hazards in the area, what measures are implemented to ensure sustainable food production?
11. what coping strategies are being implemented to alleviate food problems and increase resilience to food insecurity in this area?
12. What measures are put in place to ensure monitoring of food security strategies in the area?
13. Do the people in the area have good access to markets to buy food or sell farm produce?
14. Do you think enough is being done to alleviate food shortages in this area? How?

Section 4: factors for food aid dependency impact on food security.

15. Do you think food aid is fulfilling the intended purpose as far as food security is concerned?

16. What do you think are the factors increasing food aid dependency impact on food security?
17. What else do you think is being missed about food aid regarding food security?