

**AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF FOOD AID ON FOOD
SECURITY: THE CASE OF NGABU AREA IN MALAWI**

by

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AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF FOOD AID ON FOOD SECURITY: THE CASE OF NGABU AREA IN MALAWI

ABSTRACT

The study focused on an evaluation of the impact of food aid on food security in the area of Ngabu in the southern part of Malawi. An evaluation was needed to find out whether the food aid approach to food insecurity was the one best suited to Ngabu and whether the government's approach had produced the intended results.

This study showed that food aid, when timely used, has helped to raise the dietary status and nutrition and consumption of many households in Ngabu in times of natural disaster. Food aid, however, has had a negative impact on food security by creating laziness, food aid dependency and low food production since the source of food it offers is easier to come by than that by production. The impact of food aid on the markets of Ngabu, however, has been minimal.

KEY TERMS

Food aid, food security, food insecurity, drought, floods, poverty, impact, evaluation, Malawi, Ngabu, southern region, hunger, world hunger, food availability, food accessibility, food utilisation, vulnerability, household survey, questionnaire, personal interviews, observation.

ACRONYMS

ADP	Area Development Programme
ADFND	African Forum Network on Debt and Development
AFRODAD	African Forum and Network on Debt and Development
ARI	Acute Respiratory Infection
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ARV	Antiretroviral
BOP	Balance of payment
CCAP	Church of Central African Presbyterian
C-SAFE	Consortium of Southern Africa Food Emergency
DFID	Department for International Development
FEWS	Famine Early Warning Systems
FNLP	Food Nutrition Security Policy
FSNB	Extended Targeted Input Programme
FSNU	Food Security and Nutrition Unit
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
MANA	Malawi News Agency
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MNLP	Malawi National Land Policy
MVAC	Malawi Poverty Production Strategy
NRU	Nutrition Rehabilitation
SADIC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SGR	Strategic Grain Reserve
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
WVI World Vision International

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of the study is the evaluation of the impact of food aid on food security in the area of Ngabu in the southern part of Malawi. Because of constant droughts and floods, food distribution has taken place in Ngabu almost every year. According to Dhaka (2005:ii), the people's harvest over the past five years has never been enough and they therefore rely on food aid, hence the choice of the Ngabu area for study.

This chapter discusses the background to the problem that has prompted the study and focuses on its importance, relevance and objectives. It briefly explains the research methodology and gives a chapter outline.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM

Research background and problem introduces the reason why the research was considered in the first place. This is the setting and the problem that triggered the need and the importance for the evaluation. A detailed discussion of the research background and problem follows.

1.2.1 Research background

There is more than enough food to feed the world's 6,4 billion people, according to the World Food Programme (WFP) (2007:1). The summary report *World Agriculture: Towards 2015/2030*, a study launched by the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2002:1), states that there is enough food globally for a growing world population, and

that this situation will continue until 2030. However, hundreds of millions of people in developing countries will remain hungry. The following question needs to be answered: Why would people go hungry if the supply of food is enough? Practical Action (2006:2) specifically states that 800 million people, one-sixth of the developing world's population, suffer from hunger and fear of starvation. According to World Hunger (2000), the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that one-third of the world is well-fed, one-third is under-fed, one-third is starving and over 4 million die of hunger in a year. In addition, World Hunger (2000) reports that the UN's FAO refers to one in twelve people worldwide being malnourished, including 160 million children under the age of five, while United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) says that 3 billion people in the world today struggle to survive on US\$2 per day. These facts do not correspond with the claim that there is enough food for everyone.

Even in countries that have excess to food, some people are starving. For example, in 2005, 35,1 million Americans, including 22,7 million adults and 2,4 million children, lived in households that were unable to afford the food they needed for the year (*Wikipedia* 2007b). Practical Action (2006:2) observes that the richest fifth of the world's population eat 45 per cent of all meat and fish, the poorest fifth consume only 5 per cent, and four out of five malnourished children live in countries with food surpluses. Surely, something must be wrong here. World Hunger (2000) adds that according to UNICEF, nearly one in four people, 1,3 billion, live on less than US\$1 per day, while the world's 358 billionaires have assets exceeding the combined annual incomes of countries with 45 per cent of the world's people. One could ask why so few in the world have so much while the majority live in conditions of poverty that sometimes contribute to food insecurity. One needs to ascertain what the situation is in Ngabu, Malawi.

Sachez et al (2005:1) lament that 852 million people are still chronically or acutely malnourished: 221 million in India, 142 million in China and 204 million in sub-Saharan Africa. In the Asian, African and Latin American countries, well over 500 million people live in what the World Bank calls 'absolute poverty', and every year 15 million children die of hunger. Africa and the rest of Asia together have approximately 40 per cent of all completely poor people, and the remaining hungry people are found in Latin America and other parts of the world (World Hunger 2000). According to the United Nations (Poverty.com 2007), about 25 000 people die of hunger or hunger-related causes every day. This figure translates to one person dying every three and a half seconds, many of them children. One wonders why this situation persists despite there being enough food for everyone in the world.

Some have tried to answer these questions. According to Knight (1998:1), the reason for world hunger is poverty, which Myers (1999:81) defines as an absence: a deficit or lack of access to social power, powerlessness and a lack of freedom to grow. Runge et al (2003:13) agree with Knight and write that hunger is linked to poverty: It holds back economic growth and limits progress in reducing poverty. Sanchez, Swaminathan, Dobie, P and Yuksel, (2005:1) see hunger as both the cause and the effect of poverty. They indicate that food is always available to those who can afford it while the poorest remain hungry. People in the world are hungry not because of lack of food but because they do not have the ability to acquire it and because its distribution is not equitable. Poverty.com (2007) adds that the hungry are trapped in severe poverty and they lack the money to buy enough food to nourish them. The question that therefore needs to be asked is whether the situation is the same in Ngabu, Malawi. This study intends to provide an answer.

Shaw (2001:1–3) gives reasons why hunger exists in parts of the world. He states that the best agricultural land worldwide is used to grow commodities for which there is a large market, such as cocoa, sisal, tea, tobacco and sugar cane, items that are non-food products. There is also an extremely ineffective use of land, water and energy: Millions of acres of potentially productive farmland are used to pasture cattle, for which there is a good market in wealthy countries. The author indicates that additional reasons are war, famine, drought and poor crop yields; lack of rights and ownership of land; and increasing inefficient agricultural practices such as over-fishing. Politics, according to him, also play a part because they influence how, by whom, and for what purposes food is produced. For example, more than half the grain grown in the United States, requiring half the water used in the country, is fed to livestock. This grain would feed far more people than animals. Another example is the recent shift in the use of maize in the US: Maize, once grown for food, is being used to produce ethanol (*Daily Nation* 2007:16). These facts could explain food insecurity in parts of the world.

Food insecurity is a major problem in many parts of the Third World countries, including the Ngabu area of Malawi, hence the study. Food insecurity is the exact opposite of food security. The World Food Summit of 1996 (WHO:2007) defines food security as secure access by all people at all times to enough food for a healthy, active life. Hubbard (1995:2) puts it simply as people being able to obtain the food they need to be healthy and active, wherever they acquire it and however it is provided. Food security means that people are confident that adequate food will be available at all times. Consequently, lack of secure access to food by all people means food insecurity.

Others define food security by examining food insecurity at the national as well as the household level. For example, according to Kotze (2000:232), food security at household level means having enough food to ensure a minimum intake for all its members. Sijm (1997:86) describes food security at the household level as primarily people's access to food and the distribution of available food supplies among households and their members. At the national level, food insecurity exists when a country's production and trade entitlements become problematic: The country's agricultural production is insufficient or is too irregular to guarantee adequate supplies every year, and export revenue to import food is not sufficiently strong, as Stevens, Greenhill, Kenman and Devereux, (2000:x) maintain. This research evaluates food security or insecurity at the household level.

The WFP, a programme that started in 1961, and other agencies came up with the idea of food aid as a solution to world hunger (Shaw 2001:2). Food aid could be described as aid supplied as food commodities on grant or concessional terms. It includes donations of food commodities by government, inter-governmental organisations (particularly the WFP), and private voluntary or non-governmental organisations. Food aid is sent to food-insecure people, particularly in poor, food-deficient countries with inadequate food production or insufficient foreign exchange to import the food they need.

Food aid has been debated as a controversial form of development assistance. Writers such as Shaw and Clay (1993:1) emphasise the possible disruption of trade, disincentive effect of food aid on local food production, and creation of dependence on the parts of both government and beneficiary groups, causing food insecurity in the long

run. The European Commission (2000:10) points out that the diverse effects of providing food aid in kind may be economic inefficiency, disruption of local markets and eating habits and reduction in beneficiaries' sense of responsibility.

The question is whether these issues apply in the Ngabu area. If they do, one needs to ask what impact they have on food security and whether food aid has contributed to either food security or food insecurity in the area. This study aims to provide answers to these questions.

1.2.2 Research problem

Food security exists when people do not live in hunger or fear of starvation. Worldwide, millions of men, women and children are chronically hungry because of varying degrees of poverty (FAO 2003 as cited in Wikipedia 2007b). Many development agencies such as WFP have tried to solve the problem of food insecurity with food aid, but one needs to ask oneself whether this is the best solution to world hunger.

As seen in Chapter 2, food aid has helped to save many lives during times of disaster, such as floods or drought. Furthermore, food aid has improved lives: Children's feeding programmes have raised poor people's dietary status, nutrition and consumption. Some maintain that food aid has had a significant positive effect on food production and that it may increase net household incomes and release resources for investment in agricultural inputs. Food aid, for some, may act as an effective form of insurance against potential production losses by farmers. Yet others believe that food aid may be used as an incentive for initiatives in community and economic development. Many proponents of food aid believe that it can contribute to improving food security by assuring adequate food supplies,

stabilising domestic prices, enlarging access to food and enhancing the nutritional status of vulnerable groups. In addition, food aid may contribute to reaching several other development objectives such as raising labour productivity, improving natural infrastructure through food aid-sponsored projects, offsetting inflationary pressures and providing support to the balance of payments or the government's budget. Others have been positive and have argued that food aid may provide an important stimulus to industrial development when it is used to put under-employed labour to work to improve, for instance, building infrastructure, and that it may contribute to investment cost and ease the foreign exchange gap and provide balance of payments support. The question is whether one should agree with the proponents of food aid and whether food aid is the best solution to the problem of hunger.

As discussed in the next chapter, many believe that food aid is not a good solution to food insecurity. They maintain that food aid involves the dumping of surplus production by the rich nations onto the poorer ones and that the rich countries benefit, not the poor ones. To them, food aid sustains poverty, leads to food insecurity in the long run as it creates dependency on donor countries, disrupts local markets and the eating habits of local people, changes the local crop production pattern from the local staple food to commercial crops, reduces the beneficiaries' sense of responsibility, which encourages economic inefficiency, and eventually kills the local economy. Other criticise food aid as a political weapon and a commercial enterprise that may be destructive to the local economy by disrupting the local markets of the recipient countries and upsetting the private commercial channels of food trade and marketing. Others believe that food aid has negative effects on economic development in general and on food security in particular. They say that food aid is a disincentive to domestic agricultural

production because additional food supplies discourage domestic food production as the markets of the recipient country drive down prices and create reliance on food aid. Other critics maintain that food aid promotes an undesirable shift in consumption patterns away from traditional local staple food towards the commodities supplied as food aid. Some prefer cash as they believe food aid is inferior to financial aid. These arguments are discussed extensively in the following chapter.

The study therefore seeks to find out if all the above arguments apply to the Ngabu area. As explained in Section 3.5, Ngabu is an area in the southern part of Malawi and has been constantly hit by rain shortages and floods, when it rains. One needs to find out whether or not food aid is the answer to people's problem in this area.

The primary research problem of this study is that food aid distribution has been used as a solution to the food insecurity in Ngabu for at least the past five years. Not much research has been done to evaluate whether the distributed food aid has contributed positively or negatively to food security in the area. The secondary problem is that the government's approach to food insecurity in Ngabu, which mainly involves food aid distribution, has not been evaluated to see whether it has positive results. Has food aid contributed to people's dependency on food aid? Has it changed the people's eating habits? Has it contributed to the low or high food production in the area? This study intends to find answers to these questions.

1.2.3 Importance and relevancy of the study

This study is important because it evaluates a problem that needs to be addressed. One needs to know what food aid is doing to the people of

Ngabu. It is essential for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) distributing food in the area and for the government of Malawi to know whether providing food aid is a worthwhile solution to the problem of food insecurity in the area. The topic is relevant because it touches the essence of food-security issues in Ngabu specifically and in Malawi generally. Finally, the study will help policy makers know how to proceed with their work.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary research objective of the study is to evaluate the impact of food aid on food security and to find out whether it improves food security or increases food insecurity in the Ngabu area.

The specific secondary objectives are to

1. Understand what food aid and food security involve
2. Investigate the causes of food insecurity
3. Investigate the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security
4. Determine the factors that have led to food aid distribution in Ngabu area
5. Evaluate the impact of food aid on food availability, food access and food utilisation in Ngabu
6. Evaluate the impact of food aid on local markets in the Ngabu area.

The details of the primary and secondary objectives are found in Chapter 4.

1.4 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH METHODS

During this evaluation, different research methodologies and techniques were used. Secondary research methods were used to examine current literature on the subject of food aid and food security, and primary research was conducted to evaluate whether food aid impacts positively or negatively on food security in the Ngabu area.

Primary research was conducted according to the following four methods: household survey, observation, focus group discussions and personal interviews. The household survey was carried out in the whole community with the use of questionnaires; focus group discussions were held with three different groups; and personal interviews were conducted with government and church officials and businesspersons. These methods are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

1.5 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The research study is divided into the following six chapters:

Chapter 1 Introduction to the study

This chapter, as seen above, presents the background to the problem that has prompted the study. It refers to the importance, relevance and objectives of the study and included a brief explanation of the research methodology used.

Chapter 2 Food aid and food security

The second chapter provides the theoretical framework and examines the concepts of and relationship between food aid and food security. The chapter focuses on food aid, its history, its different forms and its impact on food security. It also examines the levels, components and categories of food security, the way in which it is attained and the causes of food insecurity.

Chapter 3 Food security and food aid in Malawi

Chapter 3 gives a brief description of Malawi and of the country's economic, health, agricultural and educational situation. It analyses the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security by looking at its agricultural and food security policies. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the general situation in the Ngabu area, the specific area of study.

Chapter 4 Research design and methodology

The fourth chapter explains and discusses in detail the secondary and primary research methods used in the evaluation. The secondary research methods include the study of existing literature on food aid and food security, while the primary research includes a household survey, focus group discussions, personal interviews and observation.

Chapter 5 Findings and discussions

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the research study and interprets the results with the use of analysed data and literature. The discussion is based on results obtained by primary research and focuses on food security and food aid in the Ngabu area.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter provides a summary of the research study and a conclusion based on the results of the research. It also discusses recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the study. These recommendations are directed at the Malawi government as well as the organisations working, or planning to work, in Ngabu.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 introduced the research problem, the research objectives and the methodology used, and it outlined the contents of the chapters that follow. The next chapter focuses on food aid and food security and provides the theoretical framework for this research study.

CHAPTER 2

FOOD AID AND FOOD SECURITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Food is a basic requirement for humans to survive. Every human needs the right quantity of the right quality of food to live a healthy life. One can obtain food from different sources: by growing it, buying it and receiving it in the form of food aid. This chapter uses literature to evaluate food aid and food security and examines the impact of food aid on food security. It defines food aid and examines its history, its different forms, and its impact on food security. In addition, the chapter examines the levels, components and categories of food security and determines how it is attained. Finally, the chapter examines the causes of food insecurity and reaches a conclusion.

2.2 FOOD AID

Food aid is described, explained and used in different ways. The following section will define it, look into its history, discuss its forms and categories and discuss its sources.

2. 2.1 Definition of food aid

South African Oxford School Dictionary (Hawkins 2000:10) defines *aid* as money, food or anything sent to another country to help it. *Aid* may also be defined as help, support or assistance given to someone in need. *Dictionary.com* (2006) defines the verb *aid* as the activity of contributing to the fulfilment of a need or purpose. Aid may also consist of a gift of

money to support a worthy cause. In some instances, aid can be seen as a piece of equipment that helps someone to do something. *Cambridge Dictionary* (2006) defines *aid* as help in the form of money, food, medical supplies or weapons that are given by a richer country to a poorer one, and this definition is closer to the type of aid this evaluation is dealing with.

For the purpose of this study, *aid* is defined as help or assistance given to an individual, family, community or nation in need. This aid can come in the form of money or be in kind, such as food, clothes, medicine, equipment, agricultural inputs and professional expertise. The purposes of such aid can be to promote food security, raise the standards of nutrition, promote the availability and accessibility of foodstuffs to the public and contribute to balanced social and economic development.

Aid can be divided into two main categories, according to the European Commission (2000:13): direct aid and indirect aid. Direct aid refers to aid that is granted directly to the government intended to support a long-term government policy, while indirect aid is that entrusted to partner organisations (international organisations), such as the WFP, the FAO and NGOs. Indirect aid is used particularly in crisis situations to address food shortages when people face temporary problems such as floods and earthquakes and to supplement direct aid for actions of a more structural nature (European Commission 2000:13). Aid in kind remains a large component of the European Union's (EU's) Food Security Programme (European Commission 2000:27).

Food aid refers to aid in the form of food provided to needy countries by developing as well as developed countries. According to the European Commission (2000:13), it is aid supplied as food commodities on grant or

concessional terms. It includes donations of food commodities by government or inter-governmental organisations, particularly private and voluntary or non-governmental organisations and the WFP. Raffer and Singer (1996:80) point out that food aid represents much more than 10 per cent of the total aid flows to the poorer countries, particularly in Africa, and is more concentrated than financial aid. It is one of the main forms of aid provided to hunger-stricken poor nations such as those in sub-Saharan Africa.

Food aid is an integral part of the aid policy of donor countries. Every country's foreign aid is a tool of its foreign policy. Its relative importance and content have long been recognised to reflect the export profile of the donor country. Whether or not that aid benefits the hungry, Shah (2005b) emphasises, is determined by the motives and goals of that policy. Cuny and Hill (1999:49–50) indicate that food aid serves two purposes. First, it can be used as the equivalent of income for families who have lost their normal source of funds; second, it can be used to finance, or partly finance, relief or rehabilitation activities.

2.2.2 History of food aid

The concept of food aid was created with an almost selfish motive by the Americans. According to Makenete, Ortmann and Darroch (1998:252), food aid was started in the 1950s, primarily as a way to dispose of a surplus production of crops in the US, and this method has since evolved conceptually, politically and institutionally. US farmers suddenly found themselves with a surplus of cotton, wheat, beef, dairy and tobacco, and many of these products could not be absorbed locally. Rupiya (2004:84–85) observes that this sudden lack of markets affected not only the

farmers but also agro-business, banking and commercial shipping entrepreneurs. Furthermore, storage of the surpluses proved to be costly. As a solution to the problem, add Rupiya (2004:85) and Raffer and Singer (1996:8), politically conscious farmers organisations engaged the government to protect their interests: Legislation in the form of public law was passed, creating a food aid facility outside the US. The main focus was to ensure that markets for the surpluses were established outside the US. Makenete, Ortmann and Darroch (1998:252) conclude that food aid made it possible to dispose of surplus stock and create a mechanism of exchange between consumers and disposers of surpluses while attempting to keep in check the normal patterns of production and international trade.

Food aid is now being distributed to many parts of the world, especially the most drought- and war-hit developing countries, including those in sub-Saharan Africa. According to Rupiya (2004:83), the African continent is the only region in the world that has not been able to feed itself since the mid-1970s. The World Food Summit (Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems [FIVIMS] 2006) estimated that approximately 840 million people in developing countries subsist on diets that are deficient in calories. The estimates indicate that roughly 826 million people are undernourished; of these, 792 million are in the developing world and 34 million in the developed world.

Although Makenete et al (1998:252) see food aid as a disposal of surplus, Tweeten and McClelland (1997:225) clearly indicate that there is a demand for food aid in parts of the world that experience food insecurity or food shortages. One may therefore conclude that food aid potentially has a role to play in the world today. This issue will be explored further.

2.2.3 Forms, categories and sources of food aid

How food aid is used and in what form is discussed below including the categories of food aid and where it comes from.

2.2.3.1 *Forms of food aid*

Food aid comes in different forms and is used in different ways. Food aid may be given as grain that requires milling, or it may be given processed so that it is ready for use. Sometimes, food aid is given as wet ration (food ready for feeding), especially to malnourished children. For example, for nearly 40 years, the WFP has provided free school lunches and in 2005, the agency's school feeding programme helped 21,7 million children in 74 countries (WFP 2007). The WFP (2007) uses food aid to soften the blow of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). The agency distributes its rations to people living with HIV and AIDS so that they can keep providing for their families and have time to transfer vital knowledge and skills to the growing number of AIDS orphans—the next generation of food providers in developing countries.

Many countries receive food aid for reasons that are not clear. For example, according to Waves (2004), China received wheat from 2000 to 2002 as food aid to finance development projects; however, it donated food (wheat, rice, corn and oils) to North Korea and several African countries during the same period. Mostly, the form in which food aid is given is determined by both the donor and the receiving government according to their policies. For instance, donors may decide to shift from

providing food aid for development purposes to giving emergency relief (or vice versa), both within a country and across countries (Waves 2004).

2.2.3.2 *Categories of food aid*

Shaw and Clay (1993:1-2) categorise food aid according to three types: project, programme and emergency food aid; each has its own set of donor legislation, procedures, sources of financing and methods of operation.

Sijm (1997:465, 479) defines project food aid as food aid meant to support specific projects. It particularly includes food-for-work (FFW) projects and supplementary feeding/nutrition projects for young children and other vulnerable groups. Clay and Stokke (1991:3) define project food aid as the supplying of food as a precondition for sustainable development, for example food for work programmes, dairy development and nutrition projects for building capital.

Project aid is mostly distributed directly to the participants involved, but occasionally it is partly monetised to finance some, or all, local project costs. Project food aid, add Shaw and Clay (1993:2), is usually aimed at transferring income to the poor or at satisfying their minimum national needs in normal years. According to Young and Abbott (2005:1), this type of food aid is often disbursed through NGOs and is used to support school feeding programmes or FFW schemes. This food aid is provided on a grant basis to specific beneficiaries and development projects. It helps to meet the additional demand for food generated by its support for development projects. This type of food aid has been used mainly in FFW programmes and for human resources development.

Programme food aid can be described as food aid meant to support the balance of payments, the government budget, the implementation of structural policy reforms, or the achievement of other general development objectives of recipient countries (Sijm 1997:473). It is provided as a grant or on soft loan repayment terms exclusively on a bilateral, government-to-government basis. The US government provides this food aid as donation or credit sale of US commodities to developing countries and emerging democracies to support democracy and the expansion of private enterprise. According to Young and Abbott (2005:1), programme food aid is usually provided to governments who subsequently sell it on local markets in a process called 'monetising'. This view is supported by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (2006:1). The latter adds that the donated commodities are sold in the recipient country and the revenue generated is used to support economic development programmes. This category of food aid can contribute positively to food security and long-term development. According to Sijm (1997:473–474), world-wide programme food aid was the most important category of total food aid with an average of 55 per cent between 1980 and 1992.

Emergency food aid is usually defined as food aid provided in response to a sudden, major shortfall in food production due to natural or man-made disasters such as droughts, pests, disease, floods or wars. Young and Abbott (2005:1) define it as food used for humanitarian purposes in the aftermath of crises caused by natural disasters or conflict. It is generally related to immediate actions and relief operations of assistance provided for free to refugees and displaced people. According to Sijm (1997:469), this type of food aid has become the most important category of the

total food aid to sub-Saharan Africa. In US terms, emergency food aid means the supply of agricultural commodities to meet emergency food needs. These may be provided under government-to-government agreements or through public and private agencies or inter-governmental organisations such as the UN's WFP and other multilateral organisations (USDA 2006). According to Maunder (2006:vi), a remarkable global shift has taken place from programme and project food aid to emergency flows providing short-term relief. He points out that by 2004, about 75 per cent of all food sent to sub-Saharan Africa was emergency aid.

The above analysis clearly shows that an understanding of the different forms and categories of food aid is critical for any recipient government or NGO as it requests food aid and develops its food security policies.

2.2.3.3 Sources of food aid

Many countries and organisations, local as well as international, donate food for the hungry. For example, the US provides over half of the total global food aid, with Japan and the European Community (EC) a distant second and third and the United Kingdom fourth. The European and Canadian donors are increasingly providing flexible cash resources (Maunder 2006:vi). According to Shaw and Clay (1993:1), the WFP is the primary international provider of food aid for development and disaster relief and the largest source of grants for food resources for developing countries.

Food produced in developing countries may be used as food aid through a variety of arrangements, as Shaw and Clay (1993:3) point out. The

authors assert that food aid may be used under triangular transactions whereby a donor purchases food in one developing country for use as food aid in another. The other method is through trilateral operations whereby a donor commodity is exchanged for a different one in a developing country, which is used as food aid in another developing country. In addition, donors may buy food items in a country to be used as food aid in the same one. The last arrangement is through exchange; it involves swaps of a commodity, such as wheat provided by a donor, for use in urban areas, or exchanges of a local commodity, such as maize, for use in the area as food aid to improve food security.

2.2.4 Arguments for and against food aid

Food aid is controversial. Heated debates about the use of food aid to improve food security in the world continue. Advocates for food aid as part of the solution to world hunger include Shaw (2001), Ruttan (1993) and Silj (1997); its opponents include Shah (2003), Raffer and Singer (1996) and the EU (2000). The opposing viewpoints are discussed below.

The world's main advocate of food aid and also the largest food aid distributor is the WFP. According to Shaw (2001:1), the WFP believes that because of the increase in hunger around the world, food aid and other forms of assistance will be required in years ahead, possibly on a growing scale. The WFP has been a major contributor during emergencies caused by natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes and man-made emergencies such as war. Food aid has helped save the lives of many people affected by floods in Mozambique and of countless others affected by drought in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia and Lesotho. Furthermore, food aid has saved many lives in war-torn countries around

the world, such as Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola and Somalia. Shaw (2001:102) observes that in Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Swaziland and many other countries, food aid has contributed to school feeding programmes whereby children are fed at school after arriving with empty stomachs.

Germany's National Food Aid Policy, the largest European donor, is another supporter of food aid. According to Cathie (1997:37), it emphasises the use of food as a means of providing food security in developing countries. France, Italy, the UK, Sweden and the Netherlands are all supporters of food aid as a means to food security (Cathie 1997:37-44).

Ragnar Nurske (cited in Ruttan 1993:37), among others, believes that food aid is important. He argues that food aid could provide an important stimulus to industrial development. He explains that in the presence of an inelastic supply of domestic food, it could prevent the domestic terms of trade from turning against the emerging industrial sector. Nurske adds that if food aid were used to help underemployed labour build infrastructure, for instance, it could contribute to one fourth of investment cost and ease the foreign exchange gap resulting from the responsiveness of domestic supply to rising demand during the initial stages of development. Sijm (1997:475) argues that much of the food aid, possibly as much as two-thirds, is in the nature of programme food aid or balance of payments support, which to some extent replaces commercial imports; this, in turn, releases foreign exchange that can be used freely and unconditionally by the recipient country.

Another strong supporter of food aid is Lavy (1990:1). In the opening

remarks to his book, Lavy says, 'Food aid has a significant positive effect on food production and any disincentive induced by the additional supply of food is offset by the positive effects.' This statement is supported by Maunder (2006:vii, 13), who points out that food aid may increase net household incomes and release resources for investment in agricultural inputs. He furthermore states that in the presence of food aid that may act as an effective form of insurance against potential production losses, farmers in Africa have been known to adopt production-maximising behaviour.

The EU believes in food aid and emphasises the importance of food aid as a means to fight world hunger as long as donors work in partnership with local governments and with institutions representing civil society and vulnerable groups (European Commission 2000:3). Food aid, for example, may be used indirectly to provide support or act as an incentive for initiatives in community and economic development. According to Makenete et al (1998:253), food aid improves food security by providing a means of protection and a way to raise the dietary status, nutrition and consumption of the poor; to the authors, food aid is intended to fill the food gap experienced by countries that are unable to produce or commercially import enough food to meet residual local demand.

As seen above, many proponents of food aid believe that food aid can contribute to improving food security by assuring adequate food supplies, stabilising domestic prices, enlarging access to food and enhancing the nutritional status of vulnerable groups. In addition, food aid can contribute to several other development objectives such as raising labour productivity, improving natural infrastructure through food aid-sponsored projects, offsetting inflationary pressures and providing support to the

balance of payments or the government's budget through the generation of so-called counterpart funds (Sijm 1997:464).

As mentioned earlier, some individuals and organisations see food aid in a negative light. Shah (2003:1), for instance, regards food aid as a means for wealthy nations to dump surplus production for free (or nearly free) on poorer nations. He believes food aid is not sent for the benefit of the poor but for that of the US and European countries as principal beneficiaries of the food aid operation. Giroux (2001:277) agrees with Shah and adds that under the pretence of a humanitarian gesture of food aid distribution, the US and Europe found an opportunity to rid themselves of their unwanted surpluses. Zahariadis, Travis and Ward (2000:663, 665) agree when they point out that many analysts believe that US food aid programmes have been driven by national interests: Food aid is being given for economic reasons as a tool for penetrating the market and enhancing exports for American producers. Shah (2005b:2) concurs and adds that foreign assistance programmes have helped the US by creating major markets for agricultural goods, new markets for industrial exports and thousands of jobs for Americans.

Cathie (1997:39) and Shah (2003:1) are other critics of food aid and see it as a political weapon and a commercial enterprise. Cathie points out, for example, that the national food aid policy of France has an explicit political and commercial purpose. To Shah (2003:3), even certain types of food 'aid' (when not for emergency relief) can be destructive. Highly mechanised farms on large acreage can produce units of food more cheaply than even the most poorly paid farmers of the Third World. When this cheap food is sold, or given, to Third World countries, the local farm economy is destroyed.

Some critics maintain that food aid contributes to the disruption of local markets in recipient countries. According to Shah (2003:1), food aid contributes to the loss of jobs and market share in the countries receiving the aid. The author states that farmers from such countries fail to compete with larger producers such as those of the US and Europe and are driven out of jobs, further slanting the 'market share'. The European Commission (2000:10) agrees that providing food aid in kind may have adverse effects by disrupting local markets and eating habits, reducing beneficiaries' sense of responsibility and increasing the economic inefficiency of the country.

Other critics of food aid have argued that it may have negative effects on economic development in general and on food security in particular. The basic concern of Maunder (2006:vi) is that the supply of food aid increases domestic food supplies, leading to a fall in product prices and disincentives to domestic agricultural production which, in turn, perpetuates the requirement for food aid. Raffer and Singer (1996:83) and Sijm (1997:465) agree. They point out that additional food supplies discourage domestic food production as the markets of the recipient country drive down prices, depending on the assumption that the food supplied as food aid represents additional supply. They see food aid as enhancing price uncertainty and volatility through unreliable deliveries of food aid, reducing incentives to reform adverse domestic food policies, creating reliance on or habituation to food aid, disrupting private commercial channels of food trade and marketing, and creating opportunities for clientele network to corrupt public officials and prevent food aid from reaching the people who really need it. Maunder (2006:vii) concludes that his concern is that food aid, especially in southern Africa,

displaces commercial trade and thereby discourages private sector investment in the market of staple foods. However, theoretical arguments maintain that food aid may be used to stimulate private investment in market storage, infrastructure and agro-industries.

Food aid, according to Shah (2003:2), gives no choice to underpaid defeated colonial societies but to continue to sell their labour and resources cheaply to the over-paid industrial societies that overwhelmed them. For example, the US lends governments money to buy food and then forces them to export their natural resources to repay the debt. Much of the food that the US exports is not only unnecessary but also harmful to the very people the country professes to be helping.

Food aid is criticised for promoting an undesirable shift in consumption patterns away from traditional local staple food towards the commodities supplied as food aid, especially wheat flour and dairy products, as explained by Raffer and Singer (1996:84). Shah (2006:1) is almost angry with this form of aid and according to the author, the US, through its Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UN's WFP, is using the famine in southern Africa to blackmail the poorest countries into accepting the huge US surplus of genetically modified (GM) food. Countries facing famine in southern Africa have been forced to accept GM food or risk the death of millions of their people. The advocates of food aid believe that the solution would be to look at the triangular transaction whereby the food for aid is obtained from neighbouring countries with export surplus available, for instance maize from Tanzania or rice from Thailand.

Food aid is frequently criticised for being inferior to financial aid. Many

donors, however, are not prepared to substitute food for financial aid. Some supporters of food aid argue that emergency relief in the form of food aid has a greater chance of reaching the needy than cash transfers do and that food aid is easier to gain political support than the other forms of aid (Sijm 1997:475). When one considers the costs of food aid transfers to agencies, either in terms of finance or real resources, it would be unlikely that the food exporting donor would give financial aid instead.

Perhaps the most serious and frequent criticism directed at food aid is that it creates 'food dependency' as it motivates recipient governments to use food aid as an alternative to the much more difficult task of increasing food production (Raffer & Singer 1996:82). These critics, Raffer and Singer add, suggest that food aid will only be helpful in the context of an economic strategy on the part of the recipient country, which encourages structural adjustment lending and stabilisation schemes and mobilises all possible resources for the promotion of domestic food production.

The above arguments show that while some believe that food aid is a solution to world hunger and has a positive effect on food security, others contend that food aid does more harm than good as it is a commercial and political endeavour on the part of wealthy countries and results in damage to the food security of recipient countries. These arguments are examined in Chapter 5 in the evaluation of the impact of food aid on food security in the Ngabu area of Malawi.

2.3 FOOD SECURITY

Food security is one of the most debated and frequently talked about topics in the world, especially in Africa. Famine, drought, war and disease have contributed greatly to the food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa. The following section includes a detailed discussion of food security, its definition, components, categories and methods of achievement. Furthermore, the causes of food insecurity are analysed.

2.3.1 Definition of food security

Food security has been defined in many different ways, at various times and by different authors and institutions. The most widely accepted definition of food security at the individual level is that of the World Bank: 'Secure access by all people at all times to enough food for a healthy, active life' (Stevens et al 2000:2). This definition seems to include the important three elements that are widely agreed to be necessary for food security and which are the *guarantee* (availability) of *having access* (accessibility) to *enough food* (utilisation) at any given time.

The World Food Summit (Global Education 2007) defined food security as follows: 'When all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs in order to lead a healthy and productive life.' This definition has also touched on all the elements of food security but has specifically included the two different ways of gaining access to the needed food: physically and economically. This distinction is important.

Hubbard (1995:2) and Lado (2001:142) give definitions of food security

that agree with the above: People should have the economic right to be physically able to obtain the food they need to be healthy and active, wherever they acquire it and however it is provided. The definitions indicate that people should be confident that adequate food will be available at all times. The definition by Santorum and Gray (1993:51) is rather different from the above and states that food security implies accessibility at all times for all groups of the population to food of sufficient quality and quantity as to meet their nutritional needs. This definition, however, does not clearly indicate how all population groups can actually enjoy the physical and economic condition that guarantees access to the food.

Putting it differently, Sanchez et al (2005:11) define food insecurity as a term relating to the condition that exists when people do not have physical and economical access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food to meet their dietary needs to lead an active and healthy life. To Sanchez et al (2005:11), access to food is closely related to poverty and lack of economic growth: The poor usually do not have adequate means to gain access to food in the required quantities.

In conclusion, on the basis of the above discussion, food security can be defined as all groups of people having the physical and the economic means to have access at all times to food of sufficient quantity and quality to meet their nutritional needs. This description means that as food becomes available, people have the means to obtain it at all times and to use it to their benefit.

Africa has a high proportion of people rated food-insecure. Besides experiencing a lack of food security, sub-Saharan Africa suffers from

several other problems, such as low and declining levels of per capita income; high levels of fiscal deficits and external debt burdens; low levels of health, education and other indicators of social development; poor performance of the public sector; severe environmental degradation; institutional decay; and infrastructural dilapidation (Sijm 2001:3). Stewart (2003:17) adds that millions of people across southern Africa have exhausted their coping capacities and are now facing serious and potentially life-threatening shortages of food.

2.3.2 Components and levels of food security

Food security can be classified into different components according to the factors that determine it. Food security is also classified in different levels as discussed below.

2.3.2.1 *Components of food security*

Food security consists of four components; availability, accessibility, utilisation and vulnerability. This description correlates with the World Bank's definition of food security: 'secure access (accessibility) by all people (vulnerability) at all times (availability) to enough food for a healthy, active life' (utilisation). Stevens (2000:ix), among others, addresses the components as sets of factors that determine food security. However, this evaluation addresses food security in terms of food components.

2.3.2.1.1 Food availability

Food availability may mean that enough food is available for an active

healthy life. Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) (2006:1) defines food security as sufficient quantities of appropriate, necessary types of food from domestic production, commercial imports or donors, which are consistently available or in reasonable proximity to individuals. Madziakapita, Abifarin and Asante (2004:9) regard food availability as the physical availability of food in the proximity of the household, while Tweeten and McClelland (1997:226) view it as the supply of food present from production, imports or stocks. Simply put, it could be the provision of a sufficient supply of food for all people at all times. Thus food can be available to a household or a nation through own production, purchase from the markets or food aid. Runge, Senauer, Pardey, and Rosegrant (2003:14) discovers that today's supply of food is more than enough for everyone but the problem lies in the general food availability linked to that of distribution. Problems of distribution may be caused by lack of transportation, inefficient market structure, political instability and war. Thus food availability is a necessity but is not sufficient to ensure food security for a household without access (Benson 2004:8)

2.3.2.1.2 Food accessibility

Food accessibility refers to the manner in which people acquire food. Tweeten and McClelland (1997:226) point out that food accessibility is the effective demand to acquire available food from earnings or as transfers from others. The problem may be caused by people's inability to access food, even if they have the means to pay for it. They may experience difficulties caused by markets, war, infrastructure and floods. According to Runge et al (2003:15), people lack access to food because of war, inadequate income and political disadvantage. Food production does not equate to food security, according to Benson (2004:8). The author

adds that food may be on the fields or in the markets but if families cannot afford to acquire it, they are food insecure. Hungry people have been seen in supermarkets and filled granaries. Sanchez et al (2005:2) add that people go hungry despite an abundant world food supply because they cannot obtain food of sufficient quantity or quality because of poverty. FANTA (2006:1) describes food accessibility as follows: when individuals have adequate incomes or other resources to purchase or barter to obtain the levels of appropriate foods needed to maintain consumption of an adequate diet and nutritional level. An individual may have access to food by growing it, buying it or receiving it as a gift from other people. The degree to which individuals have access to sufficient food, even within a household, may vary according to sex, age or labour contribution criteria (Benson 2004:8). For the urban household, sufficient income is required to acquire food in the markets; for the rural household, productive resources are required, together with sufficient labour and tools and the necessary income to acquire the food that they are not able to produce.

Tweeten and McClelland (1997:226) conclude that while food availability highlights the supply of food at the national level and production and inventory at the farm level, food accessibility highlights the effective demand and purchasing power of consumers.

2.3.2.1.3 Food utilization

Food utilisation, according to Tweeten and McClelland (1997:226), refers to the human body's actually making use of the nutrients in food that is consumed, properly digested and absorbed. Food utilisation happens when food is properly used. This, according to FANTA (2006), occurs when

there are proper food processing and storage practices, adequate knowledge and application of nutrition and child care, and adequate health and sanitation services. Madziakapita et al (2004:9) look at it as the actual consumption of food of sufficient quality and quantity to provide adequate energy and nutrients to members of households. In this case, food security concerns the quality and the nutritional value of the available food. Benson (2004:8) states that to enjoy productive, healthy and active lives (adequate utilisation), all people require sufficient and balanced levels of carbohydrates, protein, fat or calories, vitamins, and mineral fibre in their diets. One of the objectives of the EU's Food Aid Programme is to raise the standard of nutrition of the recipient population and help it obtain a balanced diet (European Commission 2000:10).

Food security, therefore, does not mean simply the availability and accessibility of food, but of food that is acceptable, eatable and nutritive. Members of a household or individuals facing deficiencies or other imbalances in diet because of lack of access to the food necessary for a balanced diet are not food secure. Ideally, food security means that all people at all times utilise sufficient quality and quantity of food necessary for an active and healthy life. People experience food insecurity even when food is available and accessible; they may have poor health, poor care and personal preferences and fail to consume and absorb adequate nutrients, with negative nutritional consequences.

2.3.2.1.4 Vulnerability

Reliable food is closely linked to notions of sustainability and vulnerability. According to FIVIMS (2006), vulnerability refers to the full range of factors that place people at risk of becoming food-insecure. FIVIMS (2006) asserts

that the degree of vulnerability of individuals, households or groups of people is determined by their exposure to risk factors and their ability to cope with or to withstand stressful situations. Benson (2004:8) points out that when people are unable to acquire sufficient food even though they use their regular means to access food, for example because of poor crop production or lack of income, they will employ a sequence of coping strategies to meet their food needs. These strategies may include the sale of land or other productive assets or the withdrawing of children from school to work. Vulnerability results when a household has to sacrifice the long-term ability of its members to acquire sufficient food in order to meet current, short-term needs. Food security incorporates the notion that a household does not have to sacrifice long-term ability to be food secure for short-term needs (Benson 2004:8).

Vulnerability may also apply in situations when time for food production is traded for that for food hunting. For example, food-insecure households may spend more time gathering food, water and fuel and less time in their fields producing tomorrow's food than others.

2.3.2.2 Levels of food security

Food security may be analysed at different conceptual levels: global, national and household. At the global level (macro level), food security means that the world food supplies are enough and the food distribution process is able to meet the needs of every household in the world. Lofgren (2003:1-2) regards food security at the global level as food production in the world as a whole meeting all food requirements of all the people living in it. According to Koc, MacRae, Mougeot, and Welsh (2007:2), the adequacy of food intake is a major issue at the global level.

The authors point out that despite advances to modernise the conditions of production and distribution of food, hunger and malnutrition still threaten the health and well-being of millions of people at the global level. One-third of the world's population is now estimated to suffer from hidden hunger. Regional and global economic crises and chronic problems of underdevelopment make the situation dire in the developing world. Global prospects for improving food security are further threatened by environmental limitations and growing poverty, in addition to a number of global economic and ecological problems that continue to limit the prospect of global food security. The problems of food distribution and insufficient purchasing power among the world's poorest people remain primary obstacles to global food security.

At the national level, food security is the sum total of household and sub-national food security and could be defined as the assured national availability of food to meet current minimum per capita requirements during a specific reference period (for instance, a year) and also meet the expected shortfall over a limited period (for instance, three months) (Kotze 2000:233). National food security can be achieved through domestic production and/or imports. Hubbard (1995:2) adds that a country is vulnerable to food insecurity if there is a risk that food supplies in the country may fall below requirements without the means of bringing in additional food. According to the European Commission (2000:12), at the national level, food insecurity is partly the result of a low level of development and a lack of viable market; at the household level, it is the result of insufficient income and the incapacity to buy food because of poverty, contributing even more to poverty.

Kotze (2000:232) defines food security at the household level as having

enough food to ensure a minimum intake for all its members. Sijm (1997:86) describes food security at the household level as primarily people's access to food and the distribution of available food supplies among households and their members. According to Benson (2004:7), a household is food secure if it can reliably gain access to food in sufficient quantity and quality for all household members to enjoy a healthy and active life. Household food insecurity can exist even when there is national food security as some households do not have the means to acquire enough food even when it is available. The availability of food on the household level, Kotze (2000:233) adds, depends on many variables such as net food production; land; labour; capital; knowledge and technology; food prices and supplies in the market; and cash income derived from reserves, credit and transfers from governments and other internal and external donors. In addition, food security within the household is affected by the culture of that household. Some members of the household, especially the husband, may be food-secure while the wife and children are food-insecure because of cultural practices that give the husband priority to good, healthy food.

At the household level, people may achieve food security through either own production, buying or receiving from other sources. Kotze (2000:231) observes that a well-functioning food system ensures and protects the food security of each individual in such a way that everybody has enough to eat to live a healthy, active life. One may ask oneself what happens when food security is not achievable by the household. When facing food insecurity, households employ a diverse set of survival or coping strategies. According to Sijm (1997:96–97), coping strategies in the broadest definition apply to almost all activities of vulnerable households over and above subsistence staple production. Here, coping strategies may be

defined as a bundle of responses by vulnerable households to deal with situations of food insecurity. These strategies include putting away dried meat and fish, migrating to food distribution centres, storing grain and collecting and cooking plants and grasses. Other coping strategies may be hunting, fishing and trapping game such as birds or rats and other rodents (Sijm 1997:96–97). Some go as far as eating wild foods such as roots, fibres, leaves, fruits, seed nuts, honey and insects. According to Prendergast (2000:57), most people in South Sudan depend on the gathering of wild fruits during the difficult months of the year: Wild foods therefore play an important role in nutrition and health in southern Sudan.

Other coping strategies applied by households include managing their risks and protecting their minimum productivity through multi- and inter-cropping, spatial dispersal of fields and use of multiple seed varieties. Sijm (1997:97) presents a list derived from literature of the main coping strategies in times of food insecurity. They include households having to save and invest in consumptive assets such as food stores, money, jewels and animals or farm equipment. During lean periods, these savings and investments are used to improve household access to food. Some rural households diversify their income sources by means of cash cropping (besides subsistence production), off-farm activities, live-stock, fishing and remittances from labour migration. Others resort to the drastic measures of simply reducing their intake of food by lowering the frequency of meals to one a day, as well as reducing the quantity and/or quality of food consumed per meal. People employed in towns provide an additional coping mechanism to those remaining in the villages: They share any income with their relatives in the village to help them survive during periods of no food.

Food security emphasises permanent access to sufficient food by all people at all times for an active, productive and healthy life. However, the following question remains: Why does the world experience food insecurity?

2.3.3 Causes of food insecurity

Different authors point out that there are many causes of food insecurity in different parts of the world and that they largely hinder food availability, accessibility and food utilisation. These causes may be political, economic and social conditions that include natural disasters, high population growth, low food production and falling prices for agriculture commodities, political instability, unequal distribution of food, lack of access to major distributors of food and shortage of means to purchase the food. The following discussion focuses on some of the most important causes of food insecurity.

2.3.3.1 *Natural disasters*

Natural disasters such as drought, floods, tropical cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes and disease cause food unavailability and therefore food insecurity. These disasters have driven vulnerable groups of people near the poverty line in many parts of the world. Drought and other climatic extremes are major factors contributing to vulnerability to food insecurity, according to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2000:5). The 1980s, the 1990s, and even the 2000s have been difficult periods for southern Africa's food economy because of the recurring and increasingly severe droughts that threatened the state of food security

(Lado 2001:1450). Drought, as UNEP (2000:5) observes, is the most catastrophic natural event to cause widespread periodic famine in Africa. The overall degradation of the natural resource base, in particular land and vegetation and desertification, has led to increasing rainwater losses through runoff, exacerbating the impact of drought. Wiebe, Ballanger and Andersen (2001:23) agree and add that soil degradation, which decreases the response to improved crop varieties, and fertiliser and irrigation have contributed to the reduction in growth of global food production and is a potentially serious concern in parts of the world.

Apart from drought, floods are natural disasters that have contributed to the food insecurity in parts of southern Africa. UNEP (2000:5) gives an example of the 1997/98 floods that affected some parts of East and southern Africa. Floods can lead to disruption of road and rail transport networks, cuts in telecommunication and breakdown of electricity and water supplies. The major direct impacts of flooding are the destruction of crops, the drowning of animals and the siltation of reservoirs. Natural disasters, as pointed out previously, have had a direct impact on food production, and hence on food availability, and have contributed greatly to people's vulnerability. In other instances, natural disasters have affected food accessibility, especially in terms of hindering the distribution of food supplies owing to floods, hurricanes and earthquakes.

Lado (2001:164) suggests the putting in place of famine early warning systems (facilitated through the timely collection and analysis of information) and other disaster management systems as a solution to the problem of natural disasters causing food insecurity. He adds that while efforts to increase the adoption of improved and drought-resistant crop variety could be initiated, investments in small-scale irrigation systems

should be pursued to sustain production levels, mitigate the impact of recurring droughts, increase income and food security, and enhance standards of living in the medium and long term. Direct transfer programmes, including poverty relief and food security and nutrition intervention, should be encouraged and should target the poor.

2.3.3.2 *Low production growth of agricultural commodities*

Low production growth of agricultural commodities is one of the major causes of food insecurity in developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa as it affects food availability and utilisation. Lack of agricultural inputs such as fertiliser and pesticides affects production and, therefore, exports. Agricultural commodities are a major source of export earning for developing countries, as the European Commission (2000:12) observes. Fertiliser, higher-yielding agricultural inputs and appropriate technologies are critical determinants of food supply, yet these are lacking in many developing countries causing low food production.

Several other factors cause low food production in developing countries. According to Shah (2001:3), one reason is wasteful use of land. Much of the best agricultural land in the world is used to grow non-food commodities such as cocoa, sisal, tea, tobacco, and sugar cane, for which a large foreign market exists. Thrupp and Megateli (1999:1) add that this wasteful use of land has been encouraged by foreign development programmes and structural adjustment policies that have emphasised uniform varieties and mono-cultural cropping systems often unsuited to local conditions and needs and that undermine customary natural resource management practices. Thrupp and Megateli (1999:2) give the example of the wheat programme in Tanzania; it displaced

between 30 000 and 50 000 pastoralists who lost access to 40 000 hectares of prime dry-season grazing lands.

According to Shah (2001:3), the wasteful use of resources such as land may be due to politics influencing how, by whom and for what purposes the food is produced (such as export rather than local food supply needs). The author points out that millions of acres of potentially productive farmland are being used to pasture cattle, an extremely ineffective use of land, water and energy, but one for which a market exists in wealthy countries. Other causes for low food production include pests and diseases affecting the crops as well as the people who are supposed to work in the fields. A striking example of pests contributing to low food production is the locust attack Niger and neighbouring countries.

A labour force decreased by diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis has contributed to the reduced crop production. Diseases have weakened and destroyed many lives. HIV/AIDS has been noted to have the greatest impact on food production and, therefore, on food security. Braun (2005:17) maintains that studies have shown a link between AIDS and decreased agricultural production. According to the international division of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC Africa) (2005), 40 million people in the world, of whom 60 per cent are in sub-Saharan Africa, live with HIV; this condition compromises people's nutritional status and increases their susceptibility to infections. In addition to diseases, malnutrition caused by lack of nutritive food weakens immunity, hastening the onset of disease and death and resulting in the reduction of the labour input available to agricultural productivity and production. Women without adequate diets give birth to children with low

birth weights and high mortality rates, resulting in a reduced future labour force. Adults without proper food intake have low productivity and low capacity to be food-secure, and these adults produce children with the problems described above, completing the food-insecure cycle (Tweeten & McClelland 1997:225–226). In this context, food production and utilisation are greatly hampered.

2.3.3.3 Falling prices of agricultural commodities

The falling prices of agricultural commodities cause food insecurity. Farmers are discouraged from producing more when the prices for their produce keep falling. In many countries, governments are unwilling to protect their farmers against big businesses that monopolise trade. Farmers may find that they are free to grow cash crops for export but are forced to sell their crops to buyers at prices far below the world market price. This situation creates an artificial poverty trap in which even the most hard-working and motivated farmers may be discouraged from producing more. This is an excellent example of the vulnerability component of food security. Thanks to the current government of Malawi where the research took place, measures are in place to cushion tobacco and cotton farmers from exploitive buyers. In a newspaper article, Phiri (2007a:10) points out that in addition to creating a set price for tobacco, the government has had to revisit its 2003 liberalisation policy on the product to curb overproduction so as to safeguard the prices for the next year. In another article, Phiri (2007b:10) states that the government of Malawi is adamant about a new set price for cotton that would be in favour of the farmers and that this is the only cash crop grown in the district in which Ngabu is situated.

Another contributor to falling prices is agricultural liberalisation which, according to Shah (2003:3), has created a global food system that is structured to suit the interests of the powerful, to the detriment of poor farmers around the world. He adds that industrial agriculture, supported by countries of the West, has not produced more food; instead, it has destroyed diverse sources of food and has stolen from other species to bring large quantities of specific commodities to the market. Shah (2003:3) cites the example of Kenya: This country, which was self-sufficient until the 1980s, now imports 80 per cent of its food, while 80 per cent of its exports are accounted for by agriculture. In 1993, EU wheat was sold in Kenya at a 50 per cent lower price than that paid to European farmers, flooding the Kenyan market and causing wheat prices to collapse in the following years, undermining local production and creating poverty. Thrupp and Megateli (1999:4) conclude that market and pricing policies, including subsidies for grain and agro-chemicals, price distortions created through fixed prices, and credit policies have hampered the ability of the rural population to gain access to global markets.

2.3.3.4 *Scarcity of land*

Lack of land is a major cause of food insecurity, especially in Africa. In many parts of the world women, especially rural women, have limited land tenure rights including rights to own, control and use the land. Less than 2 per cent of all land is owned by women globally (*NEPAD News* 2006). For women, the control of land rights has always been difficult; however, at the same time, they are expected to be the primary users and managers of the resources (FAO 2002). According to *NEPAD News* (2006:1) the rural economy of almost all countries on the African continent depends on women, but they are deprived of the right to own land.

According to the Kenyan representative at the Pan African Parliament, for example, women in his country have no right to acquire land; he added that 'no title deed is transferred to the wife once the husband is deceased' (*NEPAD News* 2006:1). Instead, it is given to her in-laws until her sons grow up. He said such a situation deprived the woman of the right to provide good care to the children she had been left with. *NEPAD News* (2006:2) notes that while women in Mozambique are entitled to land, it is difficult for them to acquire it and land needs to be made accessible to all. Land ownership is fundamental to women: They need to use land as collateral to secure bank loans and access resources necessary for food production.

Globalisation, which has induced the demand for cash crops, has contributed to the shift from food production to commercial production. The land on which women formerly grew food for their families is now being shifted to commercial production, which is generally controlled by men. Lack of rights and security regarding land are of the most serious obstacles to increasing the agricultural food production and income of rural women (FAO 2002).

2.3.3.5 *Unequal distribution of food and resources*

In many developing countries, another cause for food insecurity that affects food availability and accessibility is the unequal distribution of food. As Cuny and Hill (1999:2) observe, the distribution of food in certain countries is a political issue. In most countries, governments give priority to urban areas since the most influential and powerful families and enterprises are usually located there. The government often neglects subsistence farmers and rural areas in general. The more remote and

underdeveloped the area, the less likely the government will be to effectively meet its needs.

In addition, disparities in access, control and distribution of resources contribute to the unequal distribution of food. According to Thrupp and Megateli (1999:47), serious inequalities in resource distribution exist not only between countries and communities but also between ethnic groups and even between men and women. For example, the control of resources by the state and wealthy sectors can prevent poor people from gaining access to income opportunities and to resources and food. In many parts of the world, women face particular constraints on gaining access to land, capital and education.

An equal distribution of food and resources can be hampered by factors such as poor roads and infrastructures; extreme weather conditions; wars and conflicts; politics; market biases; and, often, lack of logistical expertise or inadequate distribution systems. For example, in Sudan, the famine between 1984 and 1985 was not primarily caused by a shortage of food but rather by poor distribution of food, transportation costs, middlemen, abuses in the customary credit system and the government's neglect to do anything to protect those affected (Thrupp & Megateli 1999:47). The sparse road and communication network hampers emergency relief operations as well as the commercialisation of the rural economy. Borlaug (2004:80) cites as example a case in Ethiopia: With excellent maize crops in mid-elevation areas, people 200 kilometres away and at a slightly lower elevation were starving and were unable to move the maize from one place to another. Another example is that of Malawi where poor roads are still affecting the distribution of food in various parts of the country. According to SABC Africa (2005), the WFP was having problems shipping

19 000 tons of food to Malawi through the normal transport road channel of distribution from Durban harbour in South Africa: This type of transportation would take time to reach its destination, so the food had to be transported through Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania.

Lack of logistic administration and expertise hinders the equal distribution of food. Logistical expertise is essential to the equal distribution of food; for example, Stewart (2003:17) points out that the WFP has to arrange and oversee all overland contracts involving food transportation from ports, silos and mills to affected countries. In each operational country, the WFP country office logistics personnel need to prepare for arrivals by obtaining import permits and to assume responsibility when the food arrives at warehouses. This is a tedious job as their efforts are mostly hampered by insufficient road infrastructure and floods, wars and bad weather.

In some cases, governments' bureaucracies have contributed to the slow distribution of food. Tweeten and McClelland (1997:235) assert that many food-insecure countries have established institutional arrangements that seriously constrain the distribution of food by both private markets and public agencies. For example, in many governments, bureaucratic red tape slows down policy formulation and implementation, contributing greatly to economic, social and political decline and, therefore, to food insecurity in many developing countries. A great deal of food can be found in one country while another has too little to feed its people. Shah (2005b) observes that 20 per cent of the population in the developed nations consume 86 per cent of the world's foods. A shift is needed: Policies that only improve the supply or availability of food should give way to distribution ones that enhance the access to food. Long-term national policy strategies should be put in place and link relief efforts to

effect long-term development for food security and nutrition and address the effects of drought-induced food shortages (Lado 2001:164).

According to Cuny and Hill (1999:75), there are many alternatives to direct food distribution during times of famine or conflict. These include the monetisation of food aid (market intervention including internal purchase programmes, direct sale of food to local vendors at subsidised rate and livestock intervention) and income support programmes such as cash for work, FFW, payment-in-kind and food stamp or food coupon initiatives. Other alternatives include efforts to raise general food aid distributions and specific nutritional interventions to help vulnerable groups (Sijm 1997:162). The European Commission (2000:38) recommends that Africa's long-term food security programmes should include rehabilitating small infrastructures; improving dirt roads; and initiating awareness and nutrition programmes, applied research, and reforestation and erosion control.

2.3.3.6 Lack of purchasing power

Lack of income is one of the most serious causes of food insecurity in most parts of the developing world and affects food, accessibility and food utilisation. As mentioned in Section 2.3.2.1, people are hungry not only because of lack of food but because they do not have the ability to purchase food and because the distribution of food is not equitable. In Botswana, Lado (2001:164) has discovered, many people, particularly women and children, go hungry because they are too poor to convert their food needs into effective market demands. Lack of access to food is a serious food security issue as it is a major contributor to malnutrition, which inhibits children's growth, increases their risk of mortality, affects

their cognitive development, reduces subsequent school attendance and performance, and negatively affects their work capacity and adults' labour productivity.

Access to food and other resources is a matter not only of availability but also of ability to pay. Those with the most money command the most resources while those with little or no money go hungry (Shah 2001:1). The author furthermore observes that politics influence how, by whom and for what purposes food is produced.

2.3.3.7 *Political instability*

A man-made cause of food insecurity, which mainly affects food availability and accessibility, is political instability, or war, leading to food insecurity in many parts of the world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The armed conflicts in Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo serve as examples. War inevitably disrupts or destroys agricultural production, cuts off transportation systems and destroys infrastructure and marketing channels that are crucial for food supply and distribution. Wars devastate natural resources by burning and destroying forest and vegetation, contaminating land with land mines and water and undermining energy sources. As Thrupp and Megateli (1999:48) observe, continuous conflict and famine have wrought devastation and have disrupted human ecologies, resource use and access arrangements for millions of people over large areas; the collapse of the states of Rwanda, Somalia, and Liberia is an example. In times of war, many people are displaced, have no time to work in their fields and therefore have no food harvest. War removes able-bodied men from agricultural production and places an extra burden on women. It diverts

resources, directly and indirectly, from more productive and socially beneficial uses (UNEP 2000:7). Conflict, whether trans-boundary or internal, exacerbates the vulnerability of poor people, displacing them from their homes and depleting their assets (UNEP 2000:8).

The degree of participation in political decision-making processes and questions of social identity in terms of race, ethnicity and religion also dictate access to resources and contribute to conflict (Prendergast 2000:570). Thrupp and Megatelt (1999:48) observe that lack of participatory democracy has been identified as another cause of problems in Africa. State systems have continued to be non-democratic and often oppressive and although corruption is difficult to document, it has contributed to food and environmental insecurity as it provokes instability, inequalities and institutional weaknesses.

War exacerbates resource allocation questions, often changing the situation of asset control dramatically. War, according to Devereux (1993:148, 155–156), is the single most significant factor explaining the persistence of famine in Africa today. War not only plays a major causal role but also is the main reason why a famine is not prevented or alleviated. An important reason why war has a devastating effect on food production is that war, similar to drought, creates refugees. Alienated from their previous sources of income and often having lost all their assets, refugees have no entitlement to food through the normal means; they are totally dependent on aid and handouts. The problems are most acute when those affected are farmers. Displaced from their land, they are producing neither for themselves nor for the market.

2.3.3.8 *Population growth*

Certain authors, such as Madeley (2000:37), do not accept population growth as a cause of food insecurity and argue that there is no relationship between the prevalence of hunger in a country and its population. This researcher, however, disagrees and argues that although population growth alone is not the main cause of food insecurity, the increasing threat of a population explosion, especially in Third World countries, is a contributing factor and partially causes the unsustainable use of resources and food. The population of the Horn of Africa, for example, has more than doubled since the first of the major droughts of recent times hit the region in 1974, and it is projected to increase by a further 40 per cent by 2015 (UNEP 2000:8). Wiebe, Ballanger, and Anderson (2001:23) point out that the world's 1999 population of 6 billion is projected to be 9 billion in 2054, that at the current pace, 78 million people are added to the world population every year and that 97,5 per cent of the increase in population occurs in developing countries. Population growth puts land under pressure. According to Jha (2006:3), for example, high population density, population growth and poverty have all placed immense demands on Malawi's natural resources causing soil erosion and degradation, deforestation, depletion of water resources, depletion of fish stocks, declining bio-diversity and the degradation of human habitat.

The countries with low income per capita and land area have low food production capacity. According to Thrupp and Magateli (1999:51), high population growth rates are rooted in poverty, inequalities and lack of economic and educational opportunities for the poor. This belief is supported by the European Commission (2000:12) who adds that

population growth outstrips economic growth. Lado (2001:12) agrees and maintains that population growth, urbanisation and displacement greatly influence food security and nutrition, especially among women and children and the elderly. UNEP (2000:8) adds that population increase has led to a dramatic increase in energy demand and that this has been met mainly by wood and organic matter such as animal manure.

Population pressures not only limit the per capita availability of food but also create problems that further aggravate and perpetuate malnutrition. The growing competition for limited resources and the struggle for a large number of people to subsist force them to act in ways that damage the cropland, pastures, forests and water supplies on which they depend for their livelihood (Berck & Bigman 1993:7, 9).

According to the above-mentioned authors, the key to the long-range solution of the food problem lies in stabilising the world population. Without a drastic decline in the rate of population growth, global food supplies could suffer intolerable strain in the years ahead. Economic assistance is required to improve the social and economic conditions of the poor and to reduce their motivation for having large families. The authors conclude that if the population continues to grow in the next century at the same rate that it grew in this century, the earth will not be able to sustain the great numbers of people with the limited resources available.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter focussed on food aid, its history, its different forms, and its impact on food security. It also analysed the levels, components and

categories of food security and described how they are attained.

While many appreciate food aid, others are against it. Their argument is that food aid is food dumping, a political weapon and a commercial enterprise. Some believe that food aid disrupts local markets and, therefore, the local economy; that it is an inferior form of aid; and that it creates undesirable consumption patterns in the receiving countries.

To many, food aid is helpful, especially in times characterised by natural disasters such as droughts, floods, earthquakes, pests and diseases. To some, it supports governments' budgets and their balance of payments and provides a stimulus to industrial and community development. The next chapter deals specifically with food security and food aid in Malawi and focuses on the Malawi government's approach to food security.

CHAPTER 3

FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD AID IN MALAWI

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study, as mentioned earlier, was performed in the Ngabu area of Malawi and the third chapter briefly describes Malawi in terms of its economy, health, agriculture and education situation with regard to food security. In addition, this chapter analyses the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security and examines its agricultural and food security policies. It finally analyses the general situation of food security in Malawi, with specific focus on the Ngabu area.

3.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MALAWI

Malawi is a land-locked country in southern Africa, bordering Tanzania, Zambia and Mozambique. It has an estimated population of over 11,4 million, of whom 87 per cent live in rural areas (African Development Fund [ADF] 2006:175). Malawi gained independence from Great Britain in 1964, and until 1993 the country remained under the authoritarian rule of Dr Kamuzu Banda (ADF 2006:175). In 1994, Malawi became a democratic country. According to Sahley, Groelsema, Marchhione, and Nelson (2005:7), Malawi is among the most food-insecure countries in the world. Only 12 of the 174 reporting countries fell below Malawi on the Human Development Index (HDI), and half of these countries were recovering from conflict and state failure. The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) (2006a:1) shows that since 1994, poverty in Malawi has increased, pushing Malawians closer to the edge of survival than ever before and leaving them unable to cope with even a moderate food

production shock. About 65 per cent of the population live below the poverty line of US\$2 per day. Rural unemployment is very high, rural wage rates are very low, and agricultural production generates relatively little income. The World Bank, according to Sijm (1997:141), estimated the level of poverty in Malawi by basing the poverty line on minimum nutritional requirements. Poverty in Malawi, the author asserts, is caused by limited employment opportunities; low physical productivity of labour and land; low levels of human capital (health, nutrition, and education); limited access to land and economic rents; minimum income transfers; and rapid population growth. These factors are more or less similar to the causes of chronic household food insecurity as discussed in Section 2.3.3. With household food supplies from own production declining, Morris (2005:1) found out, an increasing number of households were becoming completely dependent on the market for their food requirements. Reports indicated that the increased demand for food, especially maize, and increased fuel prices were forcing maize prices up, leaving more vulnerable people unable to fulfil their basic needs. For example, in 2005/6 one would often see long queues at the outlets of Malawi's state grain marketer, the Agricultural Development Marketing Corporation (ADMARC). The latter was obliged to ration sales to 10 to 25 kg per person. This situation continued until the 2006/2007 harvest when the maize production increased.

Sijm (2001:3) observes that since the mid-1970s, Malawi, similar to other African countries, was characterised by low and declining levels of per capital income; high levels of fiscal deficits and external debt burdens; low levels of health, education and other indicators of social development; a poor performance of the public sector; and environment degradation, institutional decay and infrastructural dilapidation. The

economic situation of Malawi steadily deteriorated over the years, and Malawi's food security situation was intimately linked to its economic development challenges.

3.2.1 Malawi's economic policies

Being a small, land-locked country, Malawi's closest access to the sea is Beira in Mozambique, some 1 300 km away. Having no major economically exploitable mineral deposits other than Lake Malawi on its eastern border, Malawi has always been heavily dependent on the agricultural sector for its growth and the employment of its people (Friends of Malawi News 2001/02).

Malawi's economy is agro-based, and it is one of the 15 poorest countries in the world. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (1999), 40 per cent of the people live in absolute poverty and have a per capita income of less than US\$40 per annum. Agriculture is the highest revenue earner, accounting for 40 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), an estimated 85 per cent of total employment and 90 per cent of export revenues. According to ADF (2006), severe droughts and price drops in Malawi's agricultural export commodities contributed to economic difficulties; in addition, the influx of about 60 000 refugees from Mozambique burdened the country's social services, especially in the 1980s. Moreover, Jha (2006:2) adds that industrial growth has remained constrained by inadequate raw materials and poor transport infrastructure, as well as limited engineering skills, marketing capabilities and access to capital. Malawi's economic growth rate stagnated for 20 years, growth remained anaemic and markets continued to function poorly with neither the private nor public sector

capable of dampening food price volatility.

Malawi continued to meet a great many challenges impacting negatively on its economic and social endeavours. These challenges included the freezing of aid by donors because of the previous regime's lack of prudence in its management of public finances, and erratic rainfall patterns that substantially reduced food production, rendering most Malawians food insecure. The continued depreciation of the kwacha, Malawi's currency, lead to increases in the commodity and service costs (Dhaka 2005:2). Dhaka (2005:2) notes that the local currency, for instance, slightly lost its value to the dollar from MK109,00 in September 2004 to MK114,19 in May 2005 and that inflation increased to 14,9 per cent from 10,9 per cent in September 2004, making life more difficult for the Malawian population. According to Sijm (1997:141), Malawi had an estimated per capita income of US\$200, which was low, and hardly any mineral resources in the late 1990s; furthermore, it lacked infrastructure development.

Malawi experienced one of its sharpest declines in food production, absorbing one of the worst droughts on record in 1992. By 2000, Malawi had become more dependent on imports and food assistance than ever before. According to Sahley et al (2005:15), donors provided nearly the entire development budget and official development assistance comprised 27 per cent of the GDP. As a result of its aid dependence, the country became highly indebted.

At the time when the research was concluded, the economic situation in Malawi had started to change for the better. According to Mtumodzi (2007:12), many people in Malawi believed that the economic growth

was picking up as the administration of the current president, Bingu wa Munthalika, was successfully reforming the economy and the governance. Mtumodzi (2007:12) adds that the inflation rate reached a single digit of 8,6 per cent in March 2007, as the National Statistical Office pointed out. This improvement is due to lower maize prices because of the bumper harvest of the past two years. Apart from winning the confidence of donors, Mtumodzi (2007:12) points out, macro-economic variables improved. The economy has registered an annual growth rate (GDP) of 6 per cent over the past two years while the inflation rate has decreased to below 9 per cent. Thanks to the external debt cancellation under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, Malawi's external debt was reduced from US\$3 billion to less than US\$480 million (Malawi 2007:6). In addition, the government's adoption of a series of economic policies such as a reduction in interest rates, which made borrowing affordable, helped stimulate the economy. These economic policies have put Malawi on the road to recovery, and so have the country's agricultural policies, as discussed below.

3.2.2 Malawi's agricultural policies

Malawi is a predominantly rural country, and the overwhelming majority of its households depend, wholly or in part, on agriculture for their livelihood. Having no major natural resources, Malawi has always been heavily dependent on the agricultural sector for its existence, as stated earlier. Malawi's agricultural sector is characterised by a dualistic structure: a low input/low productivity smallholder sector and high input/high productivity estate sector. According to Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) (2005), around 80 per cent of Malawi's workforce consists of subsistence farmers (the smallholder sub-sector). This sector comprises a

very large number of small-scale farmers growing mainly food crops for their own consumption; however, they also grow cash crops such as coffee, tobacco, macadamia and cotton (FAO 2006). The estate sector comprises a much smaller number of large-scale farmers producing almost entirely for the export market.

The leading export crops grown primarily on large commercial estates are tobacco, tea, coffee and sugar, with tobacco alone representing about 60 per cent of the country's total exports (FEWS NET 2006b:2). Other crops are wheat, rice and groundnuts. The future prospects for tobacco exports, however, were constrained by falling prices in 2005 and the growing anti-smoking sentiment worldwide. The report by Sabola (2006b:17) on the announcement by the Tobacco Control Commission of Malawi about the anticipated further price problems for tobacco due to projected reductions in demand by developed countries because of health concerns confirms this trend. However, the situation changed in 2006/2007 when, according to Mtumodzi (2007:13), the government of Malawi took steps to ensure that tobacco buyers did not exploit farmers by reforming the pricing system and bringing in more buyers. This approach is yet to be followed on maize as well. As of June 2007, maize farmers have been seeking government intervention on maize prices that went too low because of the year's bumper yield (Phiri 2007c:1).

Over the past 20 years, agriculture in Malawi has continued to be rain-fed. The drought, coupled with the late delivery of fertiliser and seed to the farmers, has rendered Malawi highly vulnerable to the climatic shocks that have precipitated acute food insecurity with increasing frequency (IRIN 2005). Malawi has one of the most fertile lands in southern Africa (FEWS NET 2006b:2), but although Malawi has experienced good rains, as happened

during the 1997/98 growing season, and normal weather patterns in most parts of the country, it has become increasingly incapable of availing itself of enough maize, largely because production levels could not keep pace with the population growth that nearly doubled from 6 to 11,5 million between 1977 and 2000. As Sahley et al (2005:9) observes, although maize production trended upward, it steadily fell short of the population growth and, more often, below national requirements. Dhaka (2005:1) and the Food Security and National Bulletin (FSNB) (IRIN 2005:12) point out that the drop in food production could also be due to many smallholders' not being able to afford improved farm inputs, such as fertiliser, because of a lack of financial resources and a limited number of credit facilities available to the smallholder at a reasonable cost. For example, Malawi's fertiliser requirement in a normal year is between 180 000 and 230 000 metric tons. The UN aid agencies raised about US\$7,5 million to produce fertiliser for Malawi, but this amount could buy only 13 000 to 15 000 metric tons of fertiliser (IRIN 2005).

Lado (2001:142) emphasises that natural resources and agricultural inputs, together with efficient functioning markets, are critical determinants of food production, especially when supported by governments. Until 2005, the government of Malawi found it hard to provide these to its citizens. In the run-up to the May 2004 elections, the president promised subsidised fertiliser. Towards the end of October 2004, the government announced the Extended Targeted Input Programme [EXTIP]: the free distribution of free seeds and fertiliser to the rural poor (IRIN 2005:1). However, this undertaking did not have a tangible positive outcome as the distribution was not done equally.

In July 2005, the Malawian government started subsidising fertiliser to small-

scale maize and forex-earning tobacco farmers across the board. The government also provided small-scale farmers with an agricultural inputs pack containing fertiliser and maize and legume seed. A month later, unable to cope with the costs involved, the authorities replaced the universal fertiliser subsidy programme with a coupon system that gave a limited number of subsistence producers access to fertilisers at half the commercial price (IRIN 2005:1). The 2006/2007 fertiliser and seed subsidy has seen many people attain food security, and they have at least some money to fulfil their needs. Malawi has produced surplus maize for two consecutive years and it is being sold to Zimbabwe and other South African Development Community (SADC) countries. (Mtumodzi 2007:12).

Maize is the highly favoured staple food that comprises 72 per cent of calories in the daily diet in Malawi. Roughly 175 kg of maize per person per year is required to fulfil this requirement (Sahley et al 2005:7). Furthermore, FSNB (1998:12) indicates that for a population of 12 million and an assumed daily kilo-calorie requirement of 2 200 per person, the national maize requirement is estimated at 2 793 043 tons. Adding a seed requirement of 29 956 tonnes (in maize equivalence), the total requirement is estimated at 2 822 999 tonnes. According to the 2005 crop estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security, maize production had dropped by 25 per cent from 1 733 125 metric tons in 2004 to 1 306 983 metric tons in 2005. In addition, productivity of local and hybrid maize dropped as soils became depleted. Although FEWS NET (2006a:1) indicates that Malawi has of the most fertile land in southern Africa, high soil fertility started to decline during the 1990s, reducing yields. At the same time, escalating fertiliser prices and shrinking farm sizes undermined household efforts to achieve food production self-sufficiency. Malawi's soils are now in annual need of nutrient replenishment.

Furthermore, productivity has been affected by the displacement of maize by tobacco production for export.

Limited arable land has compounded Malawians' ability to produce and access food. According to the USAID report (IRIN 2006), the country's cultural inheritance patterns, which result in land being equally divided among surviving siblings, have led to an average arable landholding of 0,23 ha per capita, and even less in the southern region. The best land in Malawi is occupied by commercial agricultural estates, forcing many Malawians to rely on the market to acquire maize and other food products. Land planted with maize has dropped from 70 to 55 per cent of all planted areas as some smallholders turned to cash crop production after 1990. Limited arable land, drought and lack of fertiliser and other agricultural inputs contributed to the drop in maize production (the country's staple food crop) and therefore led to food insecurity in Malawi. One also needs to take cognisance of the drain on agricultural labour in households affected by HIV/AIDS.

3.2.3 Health

A further challenge affecting Malawi is the poor health status of its people leading to high occurrences of serious illness and death. Malawi's health indicators are among the worst in the world. According to UNAIDS (1999:2), life expectancy has declined from 44 years to 39 years over the past decade. The infant mortality rate, which remained pegged at 135 per 1 000 live births, marginally improved to 134 per 1 000 live births over the last ten years. Under-five mortality is currently at 234 per 1 000 live births. The under-five mortality rate is aggravated and compounded by malnutrition, anaemia, pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, the most commonly reported cause of morbidity in children. Illness caused by

acute respiratory infections (ARI) is among the top five common diseases in children under five.

Malawi's health system is characterised by poor medical services; dilapidated community health facilities; shortage of essential drugs and equipment in local clinics; shortage of trained personnel; and poor management systems for transport and drug supplies. For example, the *Scottish Executive* (2006) announced that Scottish doctors, nurses and midwives, backed by cash from the Scottish government, are going to Malawi to combat disease and confront the problem of dilapidated community health facilities, shortage of drugs and poor health management systems. In addition, the Malawi government is not allocating enough resources to health and the few resources that are made available are misused by corrupt personnel.

Dhaka (2005:1) points out that Malawi has a high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate estimated at 16,4 per cent of people aged 15 to 49. Currently, HIV/AIDS patients take up about 70 per cent of major hospital capacity. The number of orphans under the age of 18 has consequently increased from 300 000 in 1998 to over 840 000, and 45 per cent of these are attributed to HIV/AIDS. In Malawi, 23 per cent of all children under the age of five are HIV positive and many of them are now being cared for by relatives who are already suffering economic hardship. The government and certain NGOs have stepped up efforts to make antiretrovirals (ARVs) available to as many people as possible, but this is not enough. The Malawi government (2007:28) has increased antiretroviral therapy (ART) sites from 109 in 2006 to 140 in 2007; over 500 000 clients have been tested and 55 000 more have been put on free ARVs.

Another major public health problem is malnutrition. Malnutrition especially affects children under the age of five at a rate of around 49 per cent. For example, according to the UNICEF situation report (IRIN 2005), the nutrition rehabilitation units (NRUs) have recorded the highest number of severely malnourished children in the southern region of Malawi, where the agency is managing about 57 per cent of the total national caseload (IRIN 2005). UNICEF (IRIN 2005) maintains that some 48 per cent of children under five in Malawi are stunted, 5 per cent are wasted or severely malnourished, and 22 per cent are underweight or malnourished. The nutritional status of children in Malawi has not improved since 1992 and has been aggravated by the impact of HIV/AIDS. According to UNICEF (IRIN 2005), one in three severely malnourished patients and two in five malnourished children in paediatric wards were HIV-positive. The National Health Plan (UNAIDS 1999) has cited further causes of malnutrition, apart from HIV/AIDS, that prevent people from being productive in their fields and work environment and from obtaining enough food for themselves. These include frequent infections, household food insecurity due to poverty, and poor weaning and feeding practices.

While funding for poverty alleviation programmes is becoming more readily available, Malawi's battle against HIV/AIDS is severely compromised by acute shortages of medical personnel, as mentioned above. According to Jha (2006:4), Malawi has one doctor per 100 000 people, the lowest figure for any country covered by the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report*. The problem is aggravated by migration. The country trains about 60 nurses each year but loses at least 100 others who leave to work abroad. Jha (2006:4) continued that more than half of this number go to Britain and that a recent study claimed that more Malawian doctors practice in Manchester

in the UK than in all of Malawi.

The health situation of Malawi is partly to blame for the country's food insecurity. Malnutrition and the high prevalence of diseases such as AIDS have severely affected the economic and agricultural situation of the country. When people are malnourished and constantly ill or need to take care of their sick relatives, they cannot contribute positively to the production of food. The health situation of the country affects the education status of children, especially of primary school children, as seen below.

3.2.4 Education

Elementary education in Malawi runs for eight years and is not compulsory. Malawi adopted the concept of compulsory primary education in principle by acknowledging in Section 13 of the Constitution that the Malawi government devises programmes to make primary education free and compulsory. As it stands, the issue of compulsory education is in the hands and at the mercy of the Special Commission of the Review of Education and is to be dealt with in parliament when the bill is passed. Sadly, the country has failed to enforce it in practice (Nsapato 2007:22). Free primary education started in 1994. Post-primary education comprises a four-year secondary school course that can lead to a university education. The Malawi Correspondence College is available to students who are unable to attend regular secondary school. In addition, Malawi has institutions for teacher training and for technical and vocational training. The University of Malawi, founded in 1964, has four constituent colleges (*Britannica Online* 2006:16).

Over the years, however, the standard of education in Malawi has dropped rapidly and is now in a dire state. It is characterised by high repetition rates, low completion rates, a high dropout rate and poor overall school attendance. The school dropout rate in the emergency-prone districts in Malawi has reached 15,7 per cent, while in some areas the rate among orphans is as high as 53,9 per cent, according to the head of UNICEF's Social Policy Advocacy and Communication unit in Malawi (IRIN 2006:2). Low food supplies have affected children's attendance and concentration, leading to an increased school dropout rate. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in collaboration with the National Statistics Office (Malawi News Agency [MANA] 2006:17), there are rampant poor health and nutrition levels among school-going children in Malawi. The survey revealed that both the quantity and the quality of food consumed by the children are inadequate for proper growth and good health, negatively affecting the quality and performance of education in the country.

An unforeseen factor contributing to a drop in the standard of education in Malawi was the introduction of free primary education in 1994. Although the new government's policy was popular, it resulted in a massive increase in enrolment, further straining Malawi's under-resourced education system. More than 1,3 million additional children came to school after the declaration of free primary education. The classrooms and teachers were insufficient to handle this influx effectively. Retired teachers were recalled and unqualified persons were brought in, causing the quality of education to drop (Mawindo 2006:2).

In Malawi, about 5 million out of a population of 12 million people are illiterate and the primary school completion rate is currently estimated at 29 per cent (Nsapato 2007:22). According to UNAIDS (1999), widespread

illiteracy, especially among women, constitutes a serious obstacle to the acceptance of new farming techniques, appropriate feeding practices and modern family planning methods. This factor contributes indirectly to food insecurity on household and national levels.

3.3 MALAWI GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO FOOD SECURITY

According to Sahley et al (2005:13), Malawi's food security issues began in pre-independent Nyasaland, a protectorate of Great Britain from 1891 until the establishment of independent Malawi in 1964. Colonial administrators took control of the population, and while they promoted productive agriculture, they took for themselves some of the best lands, turning them into estates. They produced tea and other export crops occupying over 40 per cent of arable land in Malawi today. Sahley et al (2005:13) ascertained that the 30-year regime of Malawi's first president, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, adopted similar administrative arrangements. His political party, the Malawi Congress Party, became the sole political party and his primary vehicle of patronage. Banda's estate sector drove the nation's export-oriented economy, and his food security policy became synonymous with national maize self-sufficiency. Maize was produced in sufficient quantities to meet the nation's needs, and its prices were predictable as they were set centrally through ADMARC, which was created in 1991. The estate sector was highly favoured over smallholder agriculture, and over a million hectares of customary land were leased to presidential favourites in the form of Malawi-owned estates. Tobacco was the favoured export crop, and its revenues, in addition to Malawi's labour exported to the South African mines, fuelled the growth of the economy.

For the first 16 years of Malawi's independence, the country's above-

mentioned economic approach worked. Values were conservative, citizens were subservient and the nation was outwardly at peace. However, as Sahley et al (2005:14) points out, Malawi's economy was affected by the oil crisis in the late 1970s and the decline in terms of trade. In 1980, the country was required to import maize, only the second time in 30 years.

The Malawi government has tried many different initiatives to address food security issues. These initiatives have included poverty reduction strategies, agriculture development strategies, strategic grain reserves (SGRs), market intervention through trade liberalisation and setting of a price band, stimulation of agriculture production, promotion of small businesses, land reforms, introduction of productive safety nets and even requests for donors' assistance.

In May 1995, the government started implementing the maize price band as part of its maize price and market liberalisation programme, according to FSNB (1998:16). The objective of the price band was to ensure that smallholder farmers received a reasonable return on their maize produce while the product remained affordable to those who relied on the market. So far, the implementation of the price band has not yet been successful. Lack of resources, delays in decision making and poor timing of intervention, as well as weak institutional setup, have presented problems (FSNB 1998:16).

The SGR, another initiative in addressing food security issues, supports the price band. The SGR is the principle instrument in making the price band work. The government buys the excess maize from the market during the harvest season, thereby ensuring that the price is equal to or above the floor price. In this way, farmers have a reasonable return on their

investment. This measure is eventually supposed to make maize production attractive and encourage farmers to produce more. While maize prices go beyond the ceiling price, the SGR is supposed to release maize stock into the market through ADMARC in order to increase supply and ultimately reduce consumer prices (FSNB 1998:17).

The SGR's challenge was that maize stocks in most ADMARC markets were inadequate, resulting in a scramble for maize in most ADMARC markets. Consequently, maize prices went up until the government started importing maize (FSNB 1998:18). Food security in most rural households was threatened by high and unpredictable consumer prices. In 2006, however, the government tried to strengthen the strategy again by committing budgetary resources for purchasing commodities and supporting the cost of distribution of food aid. Sabola (2006a:11) points out that the government has allocated MK500 million (US\$3, 3 million) to ADMARC, for instance, to buy maize from the local farmers. Furthermore, the Agriculture and Food Security minister urged farmers to sell their maize to ADMARC and avoid exploitative private traders. However, as of June 2007, because of financial constraints, ADMARC has bought less maize than was being offered by farmers (FEWS NET 2007:4). Consequently, farmers benefited less than had been anticipated from the high purchasing prices announced by government.

In addition to the steps mentioned above, the government is constructing a new modern silo with a capacity of 20 000 metric tons. Two others are planned for the 2007/2008 fiscal year. According to Malawi (2007:9), with the current abundance of maize in Malawi, the country will be able to buy and store food to last two years, even in the event of a prolonged drought. The grain reserve approach is important, especially with the

warning from the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) that up to 833 000 people are at risk of food insecurity for the current consumption period, according to FEWS NET (2007:3). An additional 147 800 people are borderline food insecure and require close monitoring because they could become food insecure if some economic shock were to push maize prices beyond the acceptable price. The higher-than-normal volume of maize sales by some poor net-consuming households is likely to jeopardise their food security later in the season when they become dependent on higher-priced maize from markets. The government will therefore be obliged to emphasise the SGR and market intervention strategy.

Another initiative the government undertook to address these unprecedented levels of food insecurity in Malawi was the ban on maize and fertilizer exports. The 2005/6 government budget also incorporated reforms exempting smallholder farmers from taxation and reinstating subsidies for fertilizer and agricultural inputs, which had been abandoned a few years earlier under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Malawi government's approach to food security also included putting in place food security and agriculture policies, as mentioned below.

3.3.1 Food security and agriculture policies

In order to discuss food security policy, it is important to know that food security is not a stand-alone sector but is best understood as an amalgam of policies designed to stimulate agricultural production, support rural livelihoods, reduce vulnerability through safety nets, and stimulate broad-based economic growth. Many policies and strategies in Malawi are directly linked to food security. Some are already in the implementation

stage while some are still under construction. The main ones, as pointed out by Sahley et al (2005:19), are discussed below.

3.3.1.1 Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy

The Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy (MPRS) was launched in 2002 to implicitly address the four components of food security: food availability, access, utilisation and vulnerability. This central policy document is meant to guide budget decisions. The MPRS's main aim is to outline a pro-poor strategy and stipulate budget expenditure and investments in essential social services. Its main concerns are economic growth, human capital, safety nets and governance. The strategy addresses food availability through agricultural growth, food access through poverty reduction, food utilisation through human capital development, and sustainability and vulnerability through productive safety nets and disaster preparedness.

The annual review of the MPRS 2002/03 (SARPN 2006) revealed that the strategy is not without challenges. Its shortfalls include non-availability of balance of payment (BoP) support and a poor flow of funds to ministries involved in its implementation. African Forum Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) (2003) adds that another problem MPRS faced in its formulation was civil society participation's being limited to social sector consultation and provision of information and not to higher-level policy formulation. There was little civil society capacity to engage in macro-economic analysis, modelling and detailed policy analysis.

3.3.1.2 *National Growth Strategy*

The National Growth Strategy was launched by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD) to stimulate medium and micro-enterprise surrounding the business and agro-processing sectors. Its aims are to re-energise exporters, particularly those of tobacco, tea and sugar, by providing investment incentives, the reallocation of government resources and legal/regulatory policy support. Although the strategy is designed to achieve the 6 per cent growth specified in the MPRS, it lacks congruence with the MPRS in significant ways: It implies a reallocation of resources away from expenditure allocated to the poor in order to boost the estate sector, and it does not explicitly address the relationship between growth and security.

3.3.1.3 *Food Nutrition Security Policy*

The Food Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP) is directed by the Ministry of Agriculture and aims at explicitly addressing all four components of food security. It is dedicated to tackling critical food security issues: SGRs, humanitarian assistance, information systems and the food security and nutrition policy. According to Sahley et al (2005:19) FNSP's main objectives are to

1. increase household and nutritional food availability of food, particularly by stimulating household agricultural production through irrigation, access to fertiliser, and improved access to land;
2. sustain access to food through improved rural market infrastructure and household purchasing power;
3. enforce proper food utilisation and nutrition through a variety of dietary service interventions; and

4. stabilise food security through improved disaster management, grain reserves, market innovation and surveillance and food security information systems.

3.3.1.4 *Malawi National Land Policy*

The main objective of the Malawi National Land Policy (MNLP) is to return idle estate land to traditional customary status to facilitate equitable access; however, critics argue that idle land mostly has poor soil quality. According to the Malawi government (2002:1), the land policy has the definite objective of ensuring equal opportunities for the acquisition and use and enjoyment of land for all citizens. The policy consists of complex socio-economic and legal prescriptions that include the system of land tenure which, in turn, influences the way in which land resources and benefits are distributed. The Malawi government (2002:3) points out that the country has operated without a comprehensive land policy since independence, with negative effects on the citizens of Malawi. For example, according to the Malawi government (2002:4), the failure to deal with land policy concerns has indirectly contributed to the current problems of poverty, food insecurity and perceived inequalities in access to arable land as people need land to produce food.

3.3.1.5 *Agriculture Development Strategy*

The Agriculture Development Strategy seeks to fulfil the ministry's mandate to promote and facilitate agricultural productivity and sustainable management, the utilisation of natural resources to ensure food security and increased incomes and employment opportunities. It is a strategy plan set out for the period between 2003 and 2008 (Sahley et al 2005:20)

and was drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to update its previous investment strategies and plans from 1999. The strategy, however, provides no priorities, budget or approach for its implementation.

3.3.2 Policy and programmes implementation

Food security policy and programmes in Malawi are implemented by a wide range of public sector ministries, sub-units and parastatal organisations, each with its own set of programmes and unique mission (Sahley et al 2005:30).

In addition to the above-mentioned policies, Malawi established several institutions in the late 1980s in an effort to improve its food security and political image. These institutions include National Early Warning Systems (NEWS), National Food Security and Nutrition Surveillance System (NFSNSS), National Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Relief (NCDPR) and Food Security and Nutrition Advisory Committee (FSNAC). Another major institution established in the late 1980s was Food Security and Nutrition Unit (FSNU), which was designed to improve the integration of food security and nutrition matters in government planning. Its main aim was to give guidance to the government on matters of food security and nutrition, as well as ensure coordination of policy actions and programmes across relevant areas (Sijm 1997:511).

Sahley et al (2005:29) asserts that despite the government's intervention in food security issues in Malawi, food security policies lack coherence and consensus in regard to the role of the state in terms of market intervention and the operation of safety nets. The policy-making process is dominated

by stakeholder polarisation and although consultative processes on food security policy do exist, they are external to normal government decision-making processes. Responsibilities for food security functions and programmes appear to be institutionalised poorly, leading to weak inter-agency coordination; consequently, the implementation of food security policy and programmes is affected. Accountability mechanisms for food security are weak and human and financial resource constraints affect service delivery negatively. Finally, the role of local government in food security is unclear and weak.

The political instability of the country has contributed to the slow and poor implementation of policies. For example, USAID's report (IRIN 2006) points out that at one stage the current president, Bingu wa Munthali, had been distracted from food security issues because of his ongoing political bickering with political rival and former president Bakiri Muluzi.

Tweeten and McClelland (1997:235) indicate other defects in food security in developing countries and conclude that many food-insecure countries, such as Malawi, have established institutional arrangements that seriously constrain the operation of both private markets and public agencies. For example, improper policies and bureaucratic incentives have created rent-seeking public bureaucracies that have contributed heavily to the economic, social and political decline and food insecurity in many developing countries, particularly in Africa. To the authors, the underlying problem of food shortage critically depends on the way people react to the government's implementation of food policy strategies. The issues and challenges of eradicating hunger and malnutrition, maintaining sustainable management of natural resources and creating efficient, effective and low-cost agricultural systems require

joint efforts by and strengthened partnerships among individuals, households, farmers, local communities, the private sector, civil society, government, NGOs and the international community.

3.3.3 Donor influence

The account of food security policy making in Malawi would be incomplete without a reference to donors who, on the one hand, come to relieve Malawi's fiscal problems and foreign exchange shortfalls and, on the other, block and hinder the implementation of these policies. According to IRIN (2006:1), the government of Malawi claims that since 1981, it has endured more than 20 structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and eight adjustments loan arrangements with the World Bank and IMF respectively, in addition to a number of bilateral conditions and arrangements between donors and the government. For example, in the 1990s, the World Bank advised the Malawi government to liberalise markets and let the prices find the correct levels, thereby encouraging smallholders to export and generate the foreign exchange required for imports and inputs. Fertiliser subsidies were suspended. By 1987, the marketing scheme had collapsed and the country again experienced a food crisis: Farmers had turned away from maize production and food prices soared. In response, the government of Malawi openly violated the World Bank's conditions and intervened in the market.

A serious donor blunder occurred when Malawi was incidentally forced to sell maize to earn dollars for debt servicing. According to IRIN (2006), only three months before the food crisis hit, the World Bank encouraged Malawi 'to keep foreign exchange instead of storing grain to repay debts'. Another incident took place when one of Malawi's key

commercial creditors needed to have its debt repaid. According to Muluzi (IRIN 2006:1), Malawi's president said in a BBC interview that the government 'had been forced to sell maize in order to repay commercial loans taken out to buy surplus maize in previous years'. The IMF and the World Bank 'insisted that, since Malawi had a surplus and the [government's] National Food Reserve Agency had this huge loan, they had to sell the maize to repay the commercial banks'. Malawi duly sold 28 000 tons of maize to Kenya under pressure from the country's creditors, led by the World Bank and the IMF (IRIN 2006:1)

USAID warned against too much donor influence, which has prevented ordinary Malawians from assuming control over food security policies (IRIN 2006). Donor advice on policies impacting on economic growth, agriculture and poverty reduction has been characterised by shifts and turns depending on the development models currently being used by the donor countries. According to certain analysts, for many years, donors were intent on economic models and they ignored the underlying political fragility of Malawi, fuelling the systems of patrimony, corruption and gross inequality (Sahley et al 2005:25). For example, the EU, while financing the MPRS's implementation and the preparation of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy, emphasised economic rights. Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) funds and drives policy on fertiliser subsidies while World Bank assistance requires the restructuring of ADMARC.

Donor advice or prescriptions have sometimes been confusing. They have swerved from one opinion to another: from poverty reduction to fertiliser subsidy to market intervention and back. Sometimes, the World Bank and the IMF tolerated aspects of Malawi's dysfunctional political culture, but

when their conditions were not met, loans or grants could be delayed or withdrawn, leading to major programme discontinuity.

Malawi is at the mercy of the donors who are themselves sometimes confused. Their advice is conflicting and controlling, thereby confusing Malawian policy makers and implementers even more.

3.4 MALAWI GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO FOOD AID

As been explained, Malawi has been in a constant state of food shortage with declining household supplies and has become dependent on international markets and food aid for its food requirements. Since the mid-1980s, there has been an increased demand for food, especially maize, contributing to the rising food prices. The Malawi government could no longer afford to feed its people and therefore started requesting food aid from different donors, especially in times of drought and floods. The situation has been aggravated by the influx of refugees. IRIN (2005:1) points out that at least 4,2 million Malawians, or 34 per cent of the population, were at risk of food shortage and in need of food aid in 2005. Jha (2006:4) predicted that the country could face an increasingly serious food shortfall between 2005 and 2006, with the lowest maize harvest in a decade. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in 2005, the Malawi government needed US\$51 million in food and nutritional assistance and US\$37 million in emergency agricultural assistance to ease the country's chronic food insecurity (IRIN 2005).

The Malawi government's main solution to the food crisis is to import food and request food aid from donor countries. Malawi started to import increasing amounts of emergency food on a more permanent basis since

the mid-1980s on behalf of refugees from Mozambique (Sijm 1997:469–470). In addition, it resorted to massive amounts of food relief to feed its own population after the severe drought-induced crop failures of 1991/1992 and 1993/1994. In both periods, some 23 000 tons of emergency cereal aid was distributed among 3 million Malawians.

The WFP has been active in distributing relief food in Malawi. According to IRIN (2005), WFP planned to feed about two million of the most vulnerable in seven districts in southern Malawi until April 2006 while the government and other organisations had committed themselves to feeding an additional 2,2 million people elsewhere in the country during the period before the next harvest. In July 2002, appeals were made for a million tons of food to feed 12 million people in six countries, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi, at a cost of US\$500 million (Stewart 2003:17) over a nine-month period. The UN appealed for US\$611 million for southern Africa.

In addition to WFP, many donor agencies such as UNICEF, World Vision International (WVI), USAID, DFID, the EU and the Red Cross have come to Malawi's aid. The UN launched an appeal in 2005 requesting international support to address immediate humanitarian needs and to help the government minimise the likelihood of another food crisis in years to come. As part of this initiative, WFP requested support from governments, NGOs and DFID to assist two million people (IRIN 2005).

In January 2003, three US-based NGOs began their own pipeline of US-donated food aid to the three worst-hit countries: Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. This is known as the Consortium of Southern Africa Food Emergency (C-SAFE) pipeline. C-SAFE moved food on a full cost recovery

basis. Implemented by WVI, CARE and Catholic Relief Services, the C-SAFE programme was valued at 114 million US dollars and lasted for three years. C-SAFE provided 160 000 tons of food in the first year, targeting two million people each month, with a special focus on women and children in emergency and supplementary food distributions, and provided agricultural support and development training (Stewart 2003:17).

Despite donor assistance contributing 30 to 40 per cent of the budget, the government has been forced to borrow heavily in the world market. Not only does this mean a high debt service burden, but it also causes high interest rates and the crowding out of private investment in the economy. Malawi's external debt rose to about 150 per cent of GDP by 2000. Debt relief packages agreed upon by the World Bank and the IMF and bilateral donors in December 2000 and again at the G8 summit in Edinburgh had not been implemented because Malawi had not reached the completion point under the HIPC initiative (Jha 2006:3)

To summarise, one could say that despite its efforts, the Malawian government's capacity for food security and food aid policy implementation was inadequate and was boosted by the donor community. According to Thomson (1999), policy implementation required complex multi-sector efforts between central and local levels and among governmental organisations, NGOs, the private sector and donor communities. As the food security crisis in Malawi deepened, the donor community and international NGOs filled the vacuum.

3.5 GENERAL SITUATION IN NGABU

The research was carried out in the Traditional Authority of Ngabu,

Malawi. Ngabu is an area situated in the Chikwawa district, 100 km south of Blantyre. It covers an area of approximately 9 350 square km and has a 2004 projected population of 144 576 people; it comprises 32 129 households.

Ngabu is climatically very hot and dry and has an average annual temperature of 27° C (maximum temperatures reaching 42° C) and an altitude of about 210 m above sea level. The soils are shallow to moderately deep, well drained, medium-textured and stony. The mean annual rainfall is between 800 mm and 1 000 mm. The natural vegetation is the low-altitude savannah woodland. The physical and climatic characteristics of the area are not conducive to the production of most arable crops. Millet, cassava, sweet potatoes and sorghum are drought-tolerant crops suitable for the area (Dhaka 2005:6).

The area of Ngabu is one of the few that have had food aid distributions during the past five years because of drought. According to Dhaka (2005:iii), in 2005, many farmers in Ngabu did not harvest enough food because of the prolonged dry spell that affected most parts of the country and lasted from January to the end of the rainy season. Most of the crops scorched while those that survived did not fruit well, leading to very poor harvests. The crop diversification that farmers were encouraged to adopt in the previous year did not really work to their advantage as the lack of water was too severe for most of the crops to survive (Dhaka (2005:iii).

In the mid-1980s, the community hosted displaced people who fled from the civil war in Mozambique. Many refugees settled in crop fields and woodlands in the neighbouring villages. The influx of refugees into the

area was both a human and an environmental tragedy. As a response to this event, the government and NGOs, including WVI, came into the area to partner with local communities (Nakhumwa et al 2006:7).

The Kunyinda area development program (ADP) funded by WVI started in Ngabu in 1999 because of the persisting food shortage. Ngabu, like the whole of the country, is a predominately agricultural area where over 67 per cent of the families depend entirely on farming for their income. While agriculture is the most important means of survival in the area, people have experienced difficulties in harvesting enough yields because of a number of factors such as erratic rainfall patterns and high temperatures and poor soil fertility, a lack of proper seed, and the use of inferior crop varieties that have negatively affected agriculture production. In addition, a large percentage of the land is thorny and stony, hence not suitable for arable crop growing; this factor has contributed greatly to the land shortage problems that the people experience (Phiri et al 2001).

The staple food crop for the Ngabu area, like that of all other parts of the country, is maize. About 90 per cent of all farmers in this area grow maize and some millet and sorghum as food crops. While sorghum and millet are drought-tolerant crops, maize has struggled to do well owing to the adverse conditions highlighted above. Cotton is the only major cash crop, generating more than 60 per cent of the area's income. Other crops that are grown for sale on a very minimal scale include sweet potato and pigeon peas.

A few households in Ngabu keep livestock, especially cattle. They do not necessarily provide income to the families since most households rear cattle for prestige and not for income. Rarely do cattle farmers eat the

meat of their stock because the animals are usually sold as livestock in towns (Phiri 2001).

Ngabu, similar to most parts of the Lower Shire (the southern part of Southern Region), suffers from frequent alternations of drought and flooding, giving rise to an unpredictable climate. Consequently, food insecurity is high and the situation is aggravated by low productivity among smallholder farmers, poor utilisation of the available food and high post-harvest losses. Crop production in the area is below the national average for most of the key crops in the area including sorghum, millet, groundnuts and beans. Cotton is the only crop with a yield reaching the lower average of potential yield. Post-harvest losses mainly in maize, sorghum and millet occur during transportation from the crop fields to the homesteads and markets, during shelling and storage and during processing. Attacks by pests and diseases and theft, fire and flooding account for additional losses. Although most people in the area do not favour the application of inorganic fertilisers claiming that their soils are fertile, these soils do, in fact, need an external application of nutrients.

The education status of the Ngabu area needs intervention. The literacy rate in the area is very low because of various factors including a lack of interest on the part of parents and pupils, early marriages/pregnancies, long distances to school and lack of learning and teaching materials. Educational infrastructure is not conducive to learning or teaching. For example, some pupils, especially in the lower grades, continue to learn outside under trees. Despite efforts by NGOs such as WVI to improve school infrastructure and provide school supplies in rural communities, the education sector continues to lack a proper learning and teaching environment. Many teachers continue to be housed in very poor houses,

and school supplies are not adequate to facilitate quality education (Dhaka 2005:3).

The health situation in Ngabu calls for a great deal of intervention. Health problems such as malaria; scabies; diarrhoea; HIV/AIDS; and malnutrition resulting from chronic food shortages, ignorance and poverty continue to hamper development in the area. Community members are either weak or ill or take care of the sick in homes and hospitals. However, a good number of the households (over 35 per cent) do have the basic sanitary amenities such as pit latrines and rubbish pits (Dhaka 2005:8). The prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in Chikwawa (including Ngabu) remains 28 per cent, which is far above the national average of 14,4 per cent. In this area, malnutrition is a major problem among the under-fives, at the rate of about 49 per cent.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Because of factors ranging from declining soil fertility to dependence on fertiliser subsidies, small plot sizes, lack of foreign exchange and high incidence of HIV/AIDS, Malawi is increasingly food-insecure.

Because Malawi is a land-locked country with no major natural resources, it is one of the most food-insecure countries in the world. The country has always depended heavily on the agricultural sector for its growth and the employment of its people. Furthermore, it relies on imported food and food aid from many different donors such as WFP, UNICEF and WVI, just to mention a few.

In addressing the problem of food insecurity, the Malawi government has developed and implemented different initiatives and strategies such as

the Agriculture Development Strategy, the National Growth Strategy and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Furthermore, the government has formulated and implemented food security policies such as the Food Nutrition Security Policy and the National Land Policy.

The next chapter focuses on research methodology and explains and discusses the research methods and techniques used in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology is the focus of the fourth chapter. The chapter starts with a description of the research objectives and then proceeds to a discussion of the two main research methods: secondary and primary research.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, the primary research objective was to evaluate the impact of food aid on food security and to find out if it improved food security or contributed to food insecurity in the Ngabu area.

The specific secondary objectives were to

1. Understand what food aid and food security are
2. Investigate the causes of food insecurity
3. Investigate the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security
4. Determine which factors led to food aid distribution in Ngabu area
5. Evaluate the impact of food aid on food availability, food access and food utilisation in Ngabu
6. Evaluate the impact of food aid on the local markets in the Ngabu area

4.2 LIMITATIONS TO AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The evaluation was done in Malawi and the field research was limited to the geographic area of Ngabu in Chikwawa district, 100 km south of Blantyre, Southern Region of Malawi. In the last five years, drought has affected mostly the southern part of Malawi and one of the affected areas is Ngabu, even after the recently reported bumper yield of the 2006/7 growing season, as pointed out by FEWSNET (2007:3). For this reason, Ngabu was chosen for the evaluation.

While the evaluation examines the impact of food aid on food security and the causes of food insecurity in the Ngabu area, it does not, for example, examine weather patterns or ecological issues as these were outside the scope of the study. The local language, which was first assumed to be a potential limitation, turned out to be easy to understand and facilitated communication with the local community. The community leaders and the community at large were very welcoming and helpful to the research assistants. Although transport was limited and few cars or busses moved about among the communities, the people in the area had their own alternatives, and bicycles turned out to be an efficient mode of travel. One would assume that the weather would be another limitation because floods often block access to many parts of Ngabu, but during the research the weather was mild and caused no problems. In general, the research went well and there were no major obstacles.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Different research methods were used in Ngabu, and an explanation of each is given below.

4.3.1 Secondary research

Level Ten Design (2006:1) describes secondary research as information gathered through literature, publications, media and other non-human sources. According to this source, secondary research is generally easier to perform than primary research.

In this study, secondary research focused on the collection of information relevant to the topic, as explained in Chapters 2 and 3, and it continued throughout the research as it complemented the primary research. The work mostly comprised a literature review of both published and unpublished documents and included books, journals, newspapers, the Internet and other materials, such as government documents. In this research, the study of literature constituted the secondary research and it was carried out throughout the study.

Although McDaniel and Gates (1998:98) argue that secondary research may be associated with qualitative data while primary research may include qualitative as well as quantitative data, the author believes that one may obtain quantitative data from secondary research. In addition, Learn Marketing (2006:2) identifies certain limitations to secondary research: Sometimes it is general and vague, inaccurate and out-of-date. Care was taken during the use of secondary research to make sure that these limitations were overcome.

Secondary research was done to understand the nature of food aid and its possible impact on food security. Secondary research sources were either published or unpublished. A brief description follows.

4.3.1.1 *Published sources*

Sources for secondary research included published literature such as academic books and periodicals from different libraries. Furthermore, published sources included the Malawi government's policy documents and other reports and publications on food security and food aid.

4.3.1.2 *Unpublished sources*

Unpublished sources included any paper or information that had not yet been released or was still in a draft form. These unpublished documents were mainly from WVI, such as WVI's concept papers and design documents meant specifically for the development programme currently running in the Ngabu area. Other unpublished sources were Malawi government documents on food security and reports on policy implementations. Articles from the Internet were also used as sources of secondary research.

4.3.2 Primary research

Primary research refers to the information that one collects oneself (Owl Resource 2006:1). It involves collecting data about a given subject directly from the outside world. According to Ryerson (2007:1), primary research data is collected specifically for the study at hand. It is obtained by the researcher either observing the studied subject or phenomenon or communicating directly or indirectly with the subject. Carrying out primary research may be developed into an excellent skill that is useful in business, personal or academic settings, for instance. This research is an academic research.

In this study, primary research was conducted using the four methods pointed out by Van Cleave (2006:1): a household survey, focus group discussions, personal interviews and observation. A household survey was carried out in the whole community by means of questionnaires; focus groups took the form of in-depth discussions and were carried out in three different groups; and personal interviews were conducted with government officials, church officials and businesspersons. Three separate questionnaires were designed for this research. The first was designed for the household survey, another for the focus group discussions and the last for personal interviews. Furthermore, guided outlines were designed for observation. Details of these follow below.

4.3.2.1 *Household survey*

A household survey, according to Creswell (1994:16), is a data collection process of asking people questions. According to McDaniel and Gates (1998:2), a survey constitutes an interviewer interacting with a respondent to obtain facts, opinions and attitudes whereas a questionnaire involves an orderly and structured approach to data gathering. A research method is therefore based on sampling, which involves obtaining information from only certain members of the population (Audience Dialogue 2006:1). Surveys provide a limited amount of information obtained from a large group of people and are useful when one wants to learn what a population in large thinks (Owl Resource 2006:1).

A household survey was conducted in the Masache ward of the Ngabu area (see Table 4.1a). As mentioned in Section 3.5, the whole of Ngabu covers an area of approximately 9 350 sq km, has a 2004 projected

population of 144 576 and comprises 32 129 households (Table 4.1a). Ngabu has seven wards, as can be seen in Table A below. With the use of judgement sampling methodology, the Masache ward was selected as the one in which the household survey would be conducted. The ward has a 2004 projected population of 20 724, representing 4 602 households.

This ward was purposely chosen because Kunyinda ADP, which is funded by WVI, has a food security programme and distributes food aid, which is supplied by WFP, to the needy in the ward. It was therefore easy for the researcher to assess the impact of food aid on food security in this ward as the area was already established and already had demarcated food distribution centres.

Table 4.1a Projected population and household figures for Ngabu

Name of Ward	Projected 2004 population	Projected 2004 households
Jombo ward	23 965	5 326
Therere ward	18 521	4 116
Masanduko ward	16 243	3 610
Saopa ward	26 828	5 962
Makande ward	20 814	4 625
Mponde ward	17 481	3 885
Masache ward (town)	20 724	4 605
Totals for TA Ngabu and Ngabu town	144 576	32 129

Source: Malawi National Statistics Office demography projections (July 2005)

4.3.2.1.1 General survey procedures

The general procedure in conducting this survey included the following:

1. A questionnaire was formulated in English by the researcher.
2. The questionnaire was translated into the local language for easy understanding.
3. Research assistants were chosen and trained.
4. The questionnaire was pre-tested and updated accordingly.
5. The survey was then conducted.
6. The answers were translated and recorded in English on the form so that there was no need to translate again from the local language.
7. The collected data was checked by the supervisor before analysis.
8. Data entry and analyses were performed.

Certain of the above procedures are explained below.

4.3.2.1.2 Formulation of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was formulated by the researcher and was pre-tested as explained below. The answers to the questions were recorded by ticking in a box next to each possible answer. Enough space was provided for answers that needed an explanation. One questionnaire per respondent was made available, with the respondent's answers ticked on the questionnaire by the interviewer. In this way, fewer mistakes could be made: Simply ticking in the answer is easy, as pointed out by Audience Dialogue (2002:2).

The questionnaire was translated into the local language for easy communication with the local community as most of the people interviewed were not conversant with English. The translated questionnaire

was given to all research assistants to use as a guide when asking questions, but they were to record all the responses in English, which made coding easy. (Please refer to Appendix 1 for the questionnaire).

4.3.2.1.3 Identification and training of research assistants (interviewers)

Four research assistants and one supervisor with appropriate experience were identified and recruited. The supervisor was a university graduate, while the research assistants had a school-leaving certificate ('O' level) in addition to other work-related qualifications. All these research assistants were conversant with the local language and able to communicate with the locals as they carried out the survey. The researcher trained them in the methodologies appropriate to this specific survey. The training included the following specific areas:

1. Honesty and thoroughness as essential qualities when carrying out the interviews
2. Methods of compiling the sampling frame and interval and of obtaining a sample
3. Methods of asking the questions with the use of the questionnaire and of ensuring they read the question as they appear on the questionnaire
4. Use of probing techniques so as to obtain maximum answers to open-ended questions
5. Techniques of asking questions with the research objectives in mind
6. Ethical issues, including the appropriate dress code and ways of showing respect to people in the communities

4.3.2.1.4 Pre-testing the questionnaire

The questionnaire was pre-tested following a pilot testing method to ascertain whether the questions were clear and easy to use. Pilot testing, as advised by Audience Dialogue (2002:3), was done with real interviewers and respondents and was completed under the same conditions as the survey, using a sample of eight interviews. Some disparities were noted, and the questions were modified accordingly. The pre-testing was conducted with the consent of community leaders, and the research was carried out with the necessary permission.

4.3.2.1.5 Sampling

This evaluation used probability sampling. Probability samples are sometimes known as random samples and according to Audience Dialogue (2006:1), they are the most accurate of all. With a probability sample, every member of the population has an equal (or known) chance of being included in the sample and the researcher is in a position to estimate the accuracy of the results. The sample comprised 200 households. The sample size was chosen according to a generally reliable method. According to Audience Dialogue (2006:3), there are several ways to choose a sample size: One may either calculate it according to a formula or follow a general principle. As a rule of thumb, a sample size of between 100 and 200 is recommended when one has no previous experience of surveys and no available survey data on the same subject, hence the choice of sample size in Masache. For the majority of surveys, Audience Dialogue (2006:3) observes, the sample size is between 200 and 2000.

Masache, as pointed out above, has 4 605 households. It has 11 group village headmen, from whom a random sample of five was drawn. Further details are found in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Group villages, number of households and sample size

Name of group village headman	Number of households	Number of households involved in the programme	Sample size (sample interval of every sixth household)
Chaonanjiwa	445	223	38
Chituwi	487	291	49
Maluwa	166	82	15
Chambuluka	175	62	11
Chizenga	965	522	87
Total	2 238	1 180	200

Stratified sampling methodology was used to draw a sample of 200 households for the survey. Stratified sampling, according to McDaniel and Gates (1998:315), involves probability sampling whereby common sense dictates that the population be divided into subsets on the basis of factors that relate to the characteristics of the population one is interested in evaluating.

In this survey, strata per group village headman were developed on the basis of households that had been targeted by the programme funded by World Vision (WV). The random sample was therefore drawn from the strata, and every household within the strata had an equal chance of being selected, as pointed out by Mouton (1996:138).

The following decisions were made when sampling and carrying out the survey:

1. Using the map of the area the research assistants moved from the centre of each village, taking the northern direction and then turning

to the right towards the end of the village as they sampled the households to be interviewed.

2. The research assistants had one questionnaire per household and interviewed only one person per household. The primary target was the husband as the head of the household, but if he was not available, the wife was interviewed. In cases where the wife was unavailable, the next adult person was interviewed.
3. When the whole household was unavailable or refused to be interviewed, another household was added to the list of the chosen sample.

4.3.2.1.6 Data entry and analysis

Data entry and analysis for the household survey was done by the researcher using a computer program called SPSS. This involved entering the questionnaire parameters into the programme and subsequently adding the information from the respondents' questionnaires. The information was later analysed and used in Chapter 5. The relevant questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

4.3.2.2 Focus group discussions

A focus group discussion is an in-depth examination of one particular topic or concept and consists of eight to 12 participants; they are led by a moderator whose aim is to learn and to understand what people have to say and why they need to do so (McDaniel & Gates 1998:100). According to *Wikipedia* (2006a:1), a focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitudes towards a product, service, concept or idea. On this occasion, people were asked

about their understanding and knowledge of food security and of the food they receive as aid from NGOs. Questions were asked in an interactive group setting where participants were free to talk to each other. The researcher was able to study the people and gain information from the discussion in a natural setting, as recommended by *Wikipedia* (2006a:1).

According to Gibbs (1997:3), focus group research involves an organised discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences of a topic. He adds that a focus group is particularly suited to obtaining several perspectives about the same topic and that the benefits of focus group research include gaining insights into people's shared understandings of everyday life. In addition, during this research, focus groups discussions were conducted in agreement with Gibbs (1997:3), who points out that these conversations draw upon respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way that would not be feasible using other methods such as observation, one-to-one interviewing or questionnaire surveys. Gibbs observes that a focus group enables the researcher to gain a large amount of information in a short period of time, and this was indeed the case during this research. In all three focus group discussions, different opinions on ways in which people perceive food aid and food security were analysed. These focus group discussions went very well, contradicting Gibbs's (1997:3) opinion that they can be difficult to assemble. Gibbs maintains that clearly identifying an individual message from the group may be complicated; moreover, focus groups may discourage certain people from participating, for example those who are not articulate or confident. He adds that focus group discussions may lack confidentiality and discourage participants from entrusting sensitive or personal information to

others. The negative aspects of focus groups were taken into account when the group discussions were designed and conducted.

4.3.2.2.1 Procedure and sampling for focus group discussions

Saopa was randomly chosen as the ward where focus groups would be conducted. The Saopa ward is one of seven in Ngabu and has a population of 26 828 constituting 5 961 households. The researcher decided to use a different ward so that issues of triangulation could be determined objectively. Within the Saopa ward, judgement sampling was used to select community leaders and member of farmers' associations. The third focus group discussion was conducted with WV staff members who are in the Masache ward.

Judgment sampling, as explained by McDaniel and Gates (1998:322), is also known as quota sampling: The demographic or classification factors of interest in a quota sample are selected here on the basis of the researcher's judgement.

Each of the focus group discussions comprised ten members, as recommended by Gilbert (2006:2). This recommendation is supported by Gibbs (1997:3), who points out that the recommended number of people per group is usually six to ten, although some researchers have used up to 15 people.

A decision was made to make sure that 40 per cent of the people chosen for the focus group discussion would be women, if at all possible, to have the female gender well represented.

A questionnaire with 19 open-ended questions was developed; the questions focused on the primary and secondary objectives of this research, and they were used to guide all the focus group discussions. (Refer to Appendix 2 for the questionnaire). The researcher conducted all focus group discussions.

Table 4.2 Composition of focus groups

Focus Group 1: community leaders	The first focus group discussion involved ten selected community leaders from 13 villages in the Saopa ward. In consultation with the group village headman, the researcher selected the community leaders in the Saopa ward by using judgement sampling methodology. Ten community leaders, four of whom were women, were selected because they were directly linked to issues of food security and food aid in the area as this community received food aid. The leaders were in a position to know how much food aid they received and what the impact was on their community. The community leaders gathered at a school, and the discussion took about two hours. Their participation was high, and they were clearly very knowledgeable about food security and food aid.
Focus Group 2: farmers association members	The second focus group discussion involved nine members of a farmers association, two of whom were association leaders and one was a woman. This association was called the Cotton Grower's Farmers Associations, and it was one of two active associations in the area. The other one was called the Livestock

	<p>Association. The researcher had decided to interview both associations but because of time limitations, the researcher was able to organise a focus group discussion with the Cotton Growers' Association only. The discussion with members of the association took place outside a church building and lasted about two hours. Although it was not possible to organise a focus group discussion with members of the Livestock Association, the required information was obtained from documents given to the researcher by the chairman of the association.</p>
<p>Focus Group 3: WV staff</p>	<p>The third focus group discussion was conducted with the WV Ngabu office staff. The group comprised ten people who had been randomly selected from a sample frame of 21. They were food distributors, and their supervisors were employed by the organisation. This was the only development agency working in the area, as explained in Section 3.5. WV staff members were chosen for a focus group discussion because they had been operating in the area since September 2002 and were therefore familiar with the food security situation in the area.</p>

After all the focus groups discussions had been conducted, the written records from all the groups were analysed according to a matrix that allowed the researcher to compare the information. The information obtained from the group discussions was also used for triangulation with the information collected during the survey.

4.3.2.3 *Personal interviews*

According to Owl Resource (2006:1), personal interviews are one-on-one or small group question-and-answer sessions where the interviewer asks individuals or a small group questions to obtain needed information. Personal interviews glean a great deal of information from a small number of people and are useful when one needs to obtain an expert or knowledgeable opinion on a subject.

During this research, personal interviews targeted four different groups in Ngabu. As mentioned in Section 1.4, these groups included government officials in the Ministry of Agriculture, church officials, businesspersons and NGOs in the Ngabu town area. These groups were chosen because they were directly or indirectly linked to issues of food aid distribution and food security in the area. The individuals in these groups were interviewed by the researcher personally. She used a questionnaire (see Appendix 3) specifically designed for this group, and the details of those interviewed in each group are included in the following table.

Table 4.3 Participants in personal interviews

Government officials	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The first official was from the Department of Animal Health and Industry and his title is Chief Animal Health and Livestock Development Officer. He was chosen because one would assume that he could provide information on animals as sources of food and income in the area. His information was therefore linked to issues of food security.2. The second official represented women's programmes
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	<p>in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and her title was Agriculture Communication Officer. She was chosen because she would be aware of female issues concerning sources of food in the area. She could have knowledge of the agricultural activities in the area and could possibly indicate how food-secure the area was.</p> <p>3. The third official was from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and had the title of Senior Land Resources Conservation Officer. He was chosen because he worked closely with issues of land and land use and would therefore know what could be done to make the land productive and the area food-secure.</p> <p>4. The fourth official was from the Meteorological Department and was titled Metrological Assistant Officer. He was chosen because he would know what the weather patterns of the area were and would therefore be in a position to help farmers plan for the growing seasons.</p> <p>5. The fifth official was from ADMARC and was titled District Manager. He was directly linked to food distribution through government markets and was chosen because he would know how much food was available in the area, how many people could afford to buy it and at which price. He could be aware of what food aid could do to these markets and how effective these food distribution methods were in relation to food shortages.</p>
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<p>Government officials</p>	<p>6. The first official was from the Department of Animal Health and Industry and his title is Chief Animal Health and Livestock Development Officer. He was chosen because one would assume that he could provide information on animals as sources of food and income in the area. His information was therefore linked to issues of food security.</p> <p>7. The second official represented women's programmes in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and her title was Agriculture Communication Officer. She was chosen because she would be aware of female issues concerning sources of food in the area. She could have knowledge of the agricultural activities in the area and could possibly indicate how food-secure the area was.</p> <p>8. The third official was from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and had the title of Senior Land Resources Conservation Officer. He was chosen because he worked closely with issues of land and land use and would therefore know what could be done to make the land productive and the area food-secure.</p> <p>9. The fourth official was from the Meteorological Department and was titled Metrological Assistant Officer. He was chosen because he would know what the weather patterns of the area were and would therefore be in a position to help farmers plan for the growing seasons.</p>
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	<p>10. The fifth official was from ADMARC and was titled District Manager. He was directly linked to food distribution through government markets and was chosen because he would know how much food was available in the area, how many people could afford to buy it and at which price. He could be aware of what food aid could do to these markets and how effective these food distribution methods were in relation to food shortages.</p>
Church officials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first church official was from the Catholic Church. The priest of the church was chosen and interviewed because he was in a position to know what was happening in the community as all the members of his church come from the same vicinity. In addition, this church distributes food in times of crisis. 2. The second church official was from the Presbyterian Church, the Church of Central African Presbyterian (CCAP). He was the pastor of the church and was chosen and interviewed because he was an influential figure in the community and would be aware of the food situation in the area. Most of the members of his church come from this area and the church has often been affected by the food shortage situation of its members. 3. The third official was a Seventh Day Adventist. This pastor was chosen and interviewed as his church would be directly affected by the food situation of its members.
Local	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first businessman was a shop owner selling food

businesspersons	<p>items such as rice, maize, flour, sugar and groceries.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The second businessman was influential and had an animal farm; he was the main supplier of meat to the whole of the southern part of Malawi. 3. The third businessman sold seeds and spices in a market. 4. The fourth businessman sold fish in a market. 5. The fifth businessperson, a woman, sold maize, sorghum and millet in a market. <p>The businesspersons mentioned above were chosen randomly in their specific groupings in the market, but judgement sampling was also used, especially in regard to the type of business these persons managed. They were all chosen because they were directly linked to issues of food availability and accessibility and they would all be directly or indirectly affected by free food distribution in the area.</p>
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4.3.2.3.1 Sampling procedure for personal interviews

Personal interviews were carried out using judgement sampling targeting the above-mentioned officials and businesspersons. This process was performed on the basis of whether the researcher judged that their positions were directly or indirectly connected with issues of food security and food aid. The supervisor went ahead of the researcher, made appointments with the individuals and obtained permission for them to be interviewed at appropriate times.

4.3.2.3.2 Procedure for personal interviews

A simple questionnaire with guiding questions was designed and used during the interviews, which were recorded in English. The interviews took about 20 minutes each. The questionnaire used is to be found in Appendix 3 while the collected information is in Appendix 5B to D.

4.3.2.4 *Observation*

Observation was carried out during the focus groups discussions, the household survey and the special interviews. According to Mouton (1996:162), observation takes place when the researcher is in the area and is involved in the events, simultaneously analysing the past and present history of the community. Observations provide insight into specific individuals, events or locales and are useful when one needs to learn more about an event without taking into account the biased viewpoints expressed during an interview (Owl Resource 2006:1). Observation does not necessitate a questionnaire but a list of guidelines of what to look for during the survey; the list was given to the research assistants to help them note down what they observed. The information collected from observation is contained in Appendix 6.

The following was done in preparation for observation:

1. Brief training was conducted on specific aspects of the environmental clues about the situation.
2. All research assistants were asked to pay special attention to the community in which they were carrying out the surveys. They were to note factors that could give an idea of the availability or non-availability of food in the area, such as food storages; presence and

state of domesticated animals, such as dogs; types and appearance of crops in the fields; and overall expression of people's general health. (Please refer to Appendix 4 for the guiding questions for observation).

The information collected using the above-mentioned methods for this evaluation was triangulated for the analysis of the results. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of collecting data, and it ensures an increased reliability of the results of the research (Mouton & Marais 1996:91).

4.4 CONCLUSION

The primary research went very well and without any pronounced problems. The research included the household survey that was carried out by employed research assistants with close monitoring by the research supervisor and the researcher herself. The focus group discussions involved community leaders, members of the Cotton Grower's Association and NGO staff distributing food in the area. The personal interviews were conducted by the researcher herself and involved government officials, church officials and businesspersons in the area. Observation was carried out by the researcher, the research assistants and the supervisor. The information collected with all the research methods were triangulated to come up with the final findings.

The next chapter discusses the research findings in detail and refers to the results of the collected and analysed data.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the research findings. The findings were derived from the household survey; the focus group discussions with community leaders and members of the farmers' association; and the personal interviews with government, church and NGO officials, as indicated in the previous chapter. The researcher decided to concentrate on the household survey results and to use the other results for triangulation. The presentation of the results, therefore, is based on the sections of the household survey. In each section, the results are presented in pie charts, histograms and bar charts and are triangulated with the use of the qualitative information. A discussion follows the presentation of the findings, and reference is made to the previous chapters, especially Chapters 2 and 3, which deal with the literature review and Malawi as a country.

5.2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following section shows and discusses the exhibits and tables that present the actual findings.

5.2.1 Personal information

Table 5.1 contains the personal information of the households that participated in the survey, and the information gives a picture of the social setting of the community.

Table 5.1 Household head and the number of members in the household

Household head * Household size Crosstabulation

			Household size					Total
			1-2 members	3-4 members	5-6 members	6-7 members	8 and above	
Household head	Father	Count	5	45	49	10	11	120
		% of Total	2.5%	22.5%	24.5%	5.0%	5.5%	60.0%
	Mother	Count	6	31	26	8	2	73
		% of Total	3.0%	15.5%	13.0%	4.0%	1.0%	36.5%
	Child	Count	0	0	0	1	0	1
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	.0%	.5%	.0%	.5%
	Grandparent	Count	1	3	2	0	0	6
		% of Total	.5%	1.5%	1.0%	.0%	.0%	3.0%
Total	Count	12	79	77	19	13	200	
	% of Total	6.0%	39.5%	38.5%	9.5%	6.5%	100.0%	

Table 5.1 shows that 60 per cent of the interviewed household heads were fathers, 36,5 per cent were mothers, 3 per cent were grandparents and 0,5 per cent were children. In addition, it indicates that 54,5 per cent of the households had more than five members in the household. It is critical to note that one child heads a household of six and 83 per cent of the grandparents have more than three members to look after.

The results above clearly indicate that the Ngabu area has many households headed by fathers, a sign that family structure is still respected in this region. The survey shows a large percentage of mothers heading households, some with more than six members. Furthermore, there are grandparent- and child-headed households because of the death of a husband and/or both parents due, mostly, to HIV/AIDS, in addition to malaria, scabies, diarrhoea and malnutrition, as indicated during the focus group discussions. Moreover, poverty, ignorance and chronic food shortages, as pointed out in Section 3.5, could also have played a part in

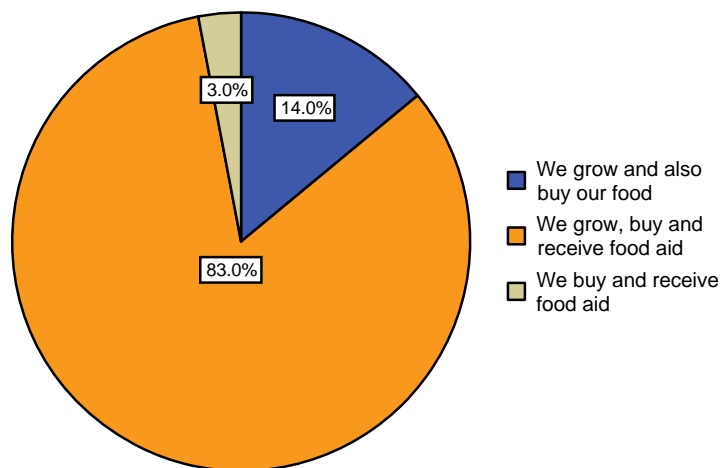
the death of the parents. The existence of grandparent- and child-headed household shows that a level of support is needed. This was confirmed during personal interviews.

5.2.2 Sources of food in Ngabu

The people of Ngabu have several ways of getting food. The following is a brief description of their food sources as the survey revealed.

5.2.2.1 Household methods of obtaining food

Exhibit 5.1 Food Sources



Ninety-seven per cent of the households indicated that they partially engaged in agriculture for food while only 3 per cent relied on buying and/or receiving food aid. Eighty-three per cent of the households grew, bought and received food aid, and 14 per cent only grew and bought food. Eighty-six per cent received food aid as part of their food source. Every household used multiple sources of food.

The results show that many households are involved in subsistence farming as their main source of food. This finding corroborates the statement made in Section 3.5 that Ngabu, similar to many other parts of the country, is predominately an agriculture area. While agriculture is the most reliable source of food, it has been difficult for the people to harvest enough yields because of a number of factors such as drought and floods, as discussed in Section 3.5. This area is also climatically very hot and dry, as was explained in Chapter 3 and later confirmed during the survey, special interviews and group discussions (see Appendixes 2 and 3). Consequently, the households have to use multiple sources of food to survive, possibly explaining why a large percentage of the households had to receive food aid.

Although a large percentage of the population is involved in farming as a source of food, a small number of the households (3 per cent) are not, possibly because they do not have fields or do not have the means to grow their own food.

5.2.2.2 *Field and harvest size*

Table 5.2 Households with fields and size of fields

			Size of the field					Total
			0-0.5 acres	0.6-1 acres	2-5 acres	6-10 acres	NA	
Have a field	Yes	Count	39	87	70	3	0	199
		% of Total	19.5%	43.5%	35.0%	1.5%	.0%	99.5%
	No	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.5%	.5%
Total		Count	39	87	70	3	1	200
		% of Total	19.5%	43.5%	35.0%	1.5%	.5%	100.0%

Exhibit 5.2 Quantity of food harvested by the households

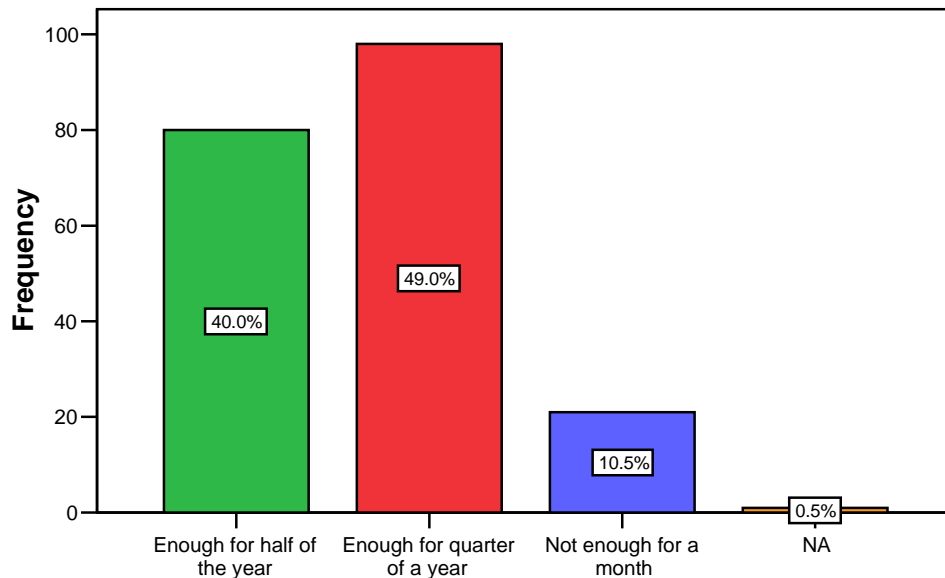


Table 5.2 indicates that 99,5 per cent of the households have fields. Of the surveyed population, 63 per cent owned fields of no more than an acre while 37 per cent had fields of more than two acres. Only 1,5 per cent had fields larger than six acres.

In Exhibit 5.2, only 49 per cent of the households harvested enough to see them through half a year; 40 per cent had enough for only quarter of the year; and 11,5 per cent harvested just enough to last them less than a month.

Almost every household in Ngabu has a field, but they are very small in comparison to the number of members in the household they have to support. The small size of the fields may be due to inadequate arable land in the area. While one may argue that the household heads may not have estimated their fields accurately, the fact that none of them harvested enough food for the year supports the finding about small

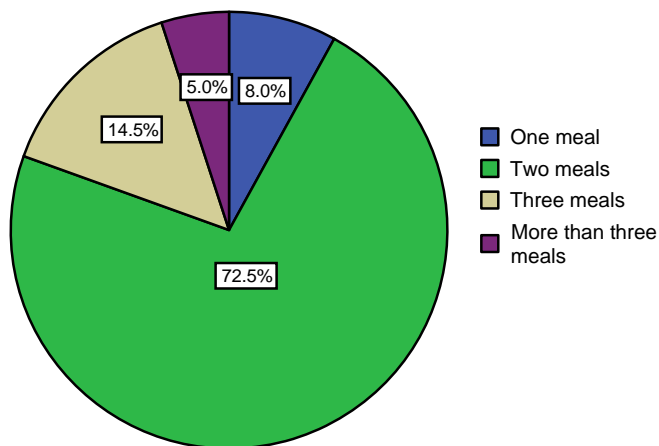
fields. Additional factors such as drought and floods, as mentioned above, may also have contributed. Another reason for the poor harvest in this area, according to certain businesspersons and government and church officials (Appendixes 1 B and D) might be people's attitude towards any change in farming methods. They pointed out that people in Ngabu were stubborn and reluctant to learn new farming methods. They insist on their old ways; for example, some even refuse to apply fertiliser in their fields believing that the soil is fertile enough and that fertiliser will make the soil lose its quality. According to the government officials, the government has tried teaching the people of Ngabu and the surrounding areas new approaches to modern farming through agricultural shows and demonstrations, but the people were very slow in adapting them. The officials also argued that many people in this area were lazy and depended on food aid and that this was one reason they did not derive enough from their fields.

According to the experience of a government official in the Department of Animal Health, an important businessman who keeps animals and a church official (Appendix 5B to D), people in this area do not see animal production as an agricultural approach that could be productive. They said if people were willing to learn, animal production could feed the whole area and beyond.

One needs to note that one household did not have a field. Several factors could have contributed to the lack: the head of the household could have been a newcomer to the area, he could have sold his field to others for food or he could simply be landless.

5.2.2.3 Number of meals per day

Exhibit 5.3 Percentage of meals per day per household



Only 19,5 per cent of the households in the survey could afford three meals a day; 72,5 per cent had two a day while 8 per cent had only one a day. The remaining 5 per cent of the households had more than three meals a day, as shown in Exhibit 5.3.

As can be seen from the findings, many households have only two meals per day, which would not be the practice if enough food were available. This situation was due to lack of food in the area. Only about 20 per cent of the households were able to have three or more meals per day in this community. Having two meals or one meal per day comes down to food rationing, which is one coping strategy for the people of Ngabu as they do not have enough food most of the time. Another coping strategy for the people of Ngabu is to beg for food, as pointed out by some of the interviewed businesspersons (Appendix 5D). This finding confirms the discussion in Chapter 3, Section 3.5. People go about begging food from churches, shop owners and other well-to-do people in the area. A third

coping strategy, according to the survey results and certain interviewed businesspersons (Appendix 5D), is doing casual work in exchange for food or money. Some households are supported by their relatives in other parts of the country who send them food or money to buy food. Some buy cheap food items from the market, such as fruits and non-staple food grains. A fourth coping strategy that agrees with the statement by Nakhumwa et al (2006:8–10), is the use of *chitibu*, which is flour made from green maize before harvest, and this practice is actually destructive. It traps the household in perpetual food insecurity as they start harvesting their maize before it is mature. Food aid could be considered a vital coping strategy for the Ngabu communities, and it would contribute significantly towards sustaining the people.

5.2.3 Sources of income

Sources of income in Ngabu are many including employment, selling farm produce, businesses and food aid. A discussion on the sources of income in Ngabu and what it is spent on follows.

5.2.3.1 *Employment, earnings and food purchases*

Exhibit 5.4 Household member with a full-time job

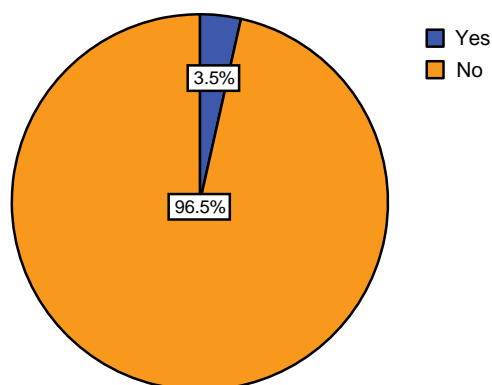


Table 5.3 Household members' payment and income used

Household member payment * Income used on food Crosstabulation

		Income used on food					Total	
		10 - 20%	30 - 40%	50 - 60%	70% onwards	NA		
Household member payment	Less than K1000	Count	1	0	0	1	0	2
		% of Total	.5%	.0%	.0%	.5%	.0%	1.0%
	K1000 - K5000	Count	2	1	2	0	0	5
		% of Total	1.0%	.5%	1.0%	.0%	.0%	2.5%
	NA	Count	0	0	0	0	193	193
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	96.5%	96.5%
Total	Count	3	1	2	1	193	200	
	% of Total	1.5%	.5%	1.0%	.5%	96.5%	100.0%	

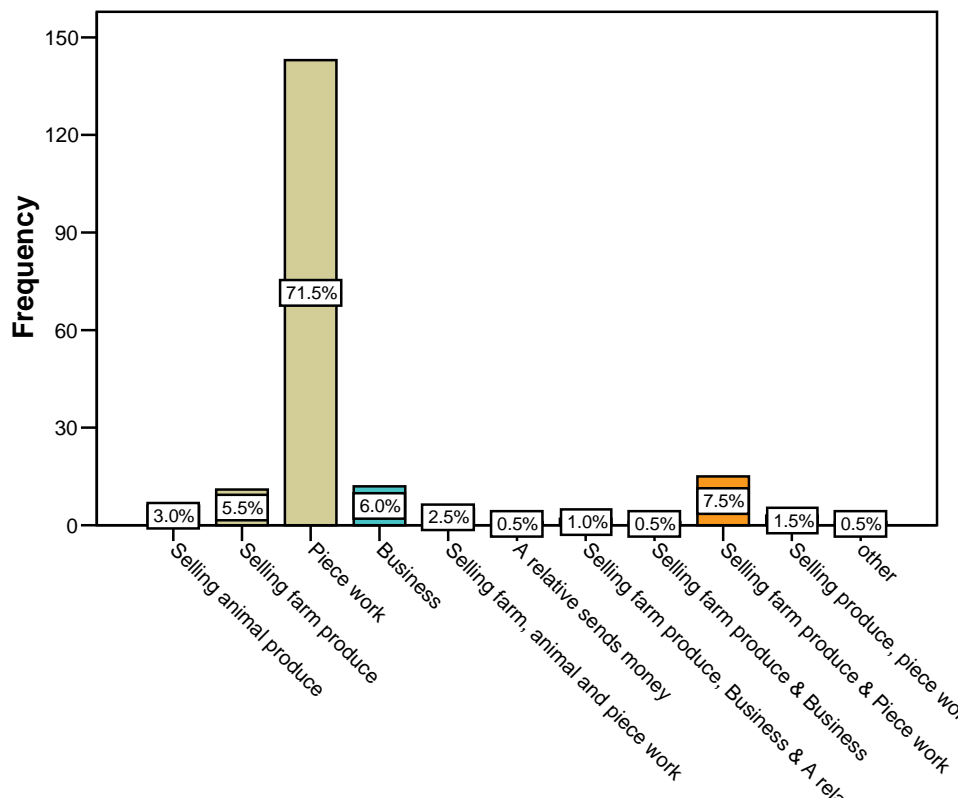
Only 3,5 per cent of the surveyed households had a member who was in a full-time job while 96,5 per cent were subsistence farmers. Of those in full-time jobs, 29 per cent received less than MK1 000 (US\$7,14) per month while the remaining 71 per cent received between MK1 000 (US\$7,14) and MK5 000 (US\$35,71) per month. Forty-three per cent of the members who worked used 10 to 20 per cent of their income on food while 14 per cent used 30 to 40 per cent, 29 per cent used 50 to 60 per cent and only 14 per cent used more than 70 per cent for food.

Very few people in Ngabu have full-time jobs, perhaps because this is a

rural area and not many job opportunities are available. Most of the educated people have moved to cities and towns in search of work. The members who were working received very little money, which may suggest that the jobs they were doing were unprofessional occupations. Although food shortage is a problem in this area, the money that the members of the households received was not all used for food because the households had other needs that required money.

5.2.3.2 Source of income apart from that of a full-time job

Exhibit 5.5 Sources of income



Apart from full-time jobs, 71,5 per cent of the households relied on piece jobs or casual labour as their source of income. Only 6,0 per cent were

involved in businesses, 5,5 per cent had their full income from farming, 3 per cent sold their animals for income, 0,5 per cent received help from relatives who sent them money and the rest had multiple sources of income.

This survey was conducted in a rural community where employment opportunities are few to non-existent, as explained above. Close to this community is a big sugar plantation belonging to a large sugar-producing company, hence the availability of casual labour. Other sources of casual labour in these communities include working in other people's gardens, serving as maids and gardeners, acting as porters in bus depots and providing services as transporters on bicycles. People's involvement in casual labour may indicate that they distrust their fields to produce enough food owing to drought and bad weather. These piece jobs, unfortunately, take people away from their own fields and eventually create a cycle of poverty as they do not pay much attention to the production of their own food.

A small percentage of the people in Ngabu earn their income from small businesses. These include buying and selling clothes, mostly second-hand; spare parts for cars and bicycles; and food items in markets. Visiting these markets, one can tell that the businesses are mostly on a small scale, possibly indicating a lack of capital and financial support. Some households own bicycles to transport people and goods, some own oxcarts that transport goods and some sell cooked food items. The following section shows that in all these businesses, the people do not earn enough to sustain them throughout the year. Only a small number of the surveyed households obtain an income by selling their farm produce because the majority do not produce enough to feed themselves. Some

still sell their food produce, even though they do not have enough to see them through their farming year. Others sell their animals, mostly at low prices, as they become desperate. One church official (Appendix 5C) lamented that if only the animal farmers could sell their animals during profitable times, for instance during harvest, they would do so at a good price and would be able to save some money and buy food later when in need. A few of the households are assisted by their relatives who send them food or money for food. These relatives might be working in town where they have full-time jobs, and this occurrence may suggest strong family ties in the community. How much households actually earn per month and how much is used for food alone is discussed next.

5.2.3.3 Household income and amount spent on food

Table 5.4 Household income per month and amount spent on food

			Income used on food				Total
			10 - 20%	30 - 40%	50 - 60%	70% onwards	
Earning per month	Less than K1000	Count	19	12	21	49	101
		% of Total	9.5%	6.0%	10.5%	24.5%	50.5%
	K1000 - K5000	Count	21	9	29	29	88
		% of Total	10.5%	4.5%	14.5%	14.5%	44.0%
	K6000 - K10000	Count	2	2	5	1	10
		% of Total	1.0%	1.0%	2.5%	.5%	5.0%
	K11000 - K20000	Count	0	0	1	0	1
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	.5%	.0%	.5%
Total	Count		42	23	56	79	200
	% of Total		21.0%	11.5%	28.0%	39.5%	100.0%

Table 5.4 shows that 50,5 per cent of the households in Ngabu earned less than MK1 000 (US\$7,14) per month, 44 per cent earned between MK1,000 (US\$7,14) and MK5 000 (US\$35,71), 5 per cent earned between MK6 000 (US\$42,87) and MK10 000 (US\$71,43) and only one household earned more than MK11 000 (US\$78,57). Of the money they earned, more than 67 per

cent of the households spent more than 50 per cent on food; 39,5 per cent of the households used more than 70 per cent for food.

The levels of income in Ngabu are low and could be a sign of low economic activity and cash circulation in the area. More than 94,5 per cent of the households receive less than MK5 000 (US\$35 71) per month; if one takes an average of five people per household, this figure translates to US\$7,14 per month per person, which is less than a dollar a day as far as SARP (2007:1) is concerned. Seventy per cent is a high percentage of one's monthly income to spend on food and it shows that the households in the area are desperate for food. Although households did not harvest enough for the year, they still sold what they had to obtain money for other needs; some even sold the food they received as food aid (Appendix 5B). In addition, some grew cotton, which is a cash crop, to help them earn an income. Interestingly, all the households earned some money per month.

5.2.4 Food aid

Food aid is a major source of food in Ngabu. Details of food aid; the type of food people receive as food aid and the frequency of food received is discussed below.

5.2.4.1 Food aid details

Exhibit 5.6 Households receiving food aid in the previous six months

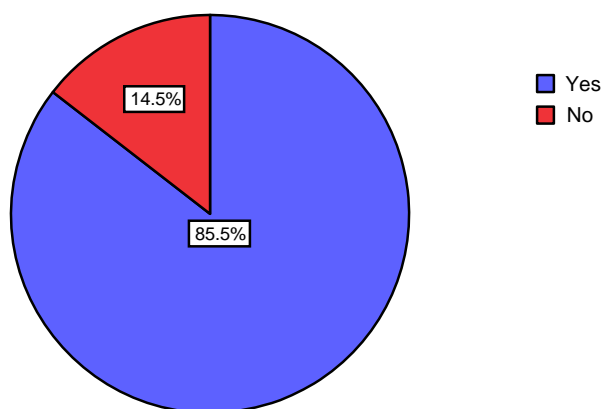


Table 5.5 Type and frequency of food received over a period of six months

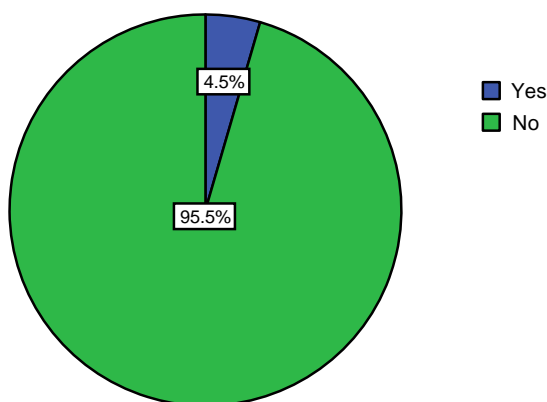
		Times hh received food the past six months				Total
		Twice	Three times	More than three times	NA	
Type of food received from the agencies	Maize or maizeflour beans, cooking	Count 0	12	40	0	52
		% of Total .0%	6.0%	20.0%	.0%	26.0%
	Maize or maize flour Sorghum, beans & cooking oil	Count 1	6	112	0	119
	% of Total .5%	3.0%	56.0%	.0%	59.5%	
	NA	Count 0	0	0	29	29
	% of Total .0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	14.5%	14.5%
Total		Count 1	18	152	29	200
		% of Total .5%	9.0%	76.0%	14.5%	100.0%

Eighty-five per cent of households in Ngabu received food aid during the six months preceding the survey while 14,5 per cent did not, as seen in Exhibit 5.6. Seventy-six per cent received food aid more than three times in the six months, and they were given maize or maize flour, beans, sorghum and cooking oil.

The survey took place during April 2007, and 85,5 per cent of the households had been receiving food aid since November 2006. As pointed out in Section 5.2.2.1, the remaining percentage that did not receive food aid grew and/or bought its own food. Apart from churches giving aid to a few households, (Appendix 5C) WV has been the main food aid distributor since September 2002. According to the WV food distribution coordinator, WV obtains the food from WFP and the organisation distributed 169 186 metric tons of assorted food (50 kg cereals, 5 kg pulses and 1,85 kg vegetable oils per household per month) in 2006/2007. People in the area normally grow maize, sorghum and millet and as in many other parts of the country, their main staple food is maize. Clearly, they receive the same type of food as aid: maize, sorghum, millet and beans. 14,5 per cent of the households did not receive any food aid, not because they did not need it but probably because the food aid was not enough for everyone.

5.2.4.2 Reasons why some households do or do not grow their own food

Exhibit 5.7 Verification of a question: Is it true that people do not want to grow their own food?



Food aid is not enough

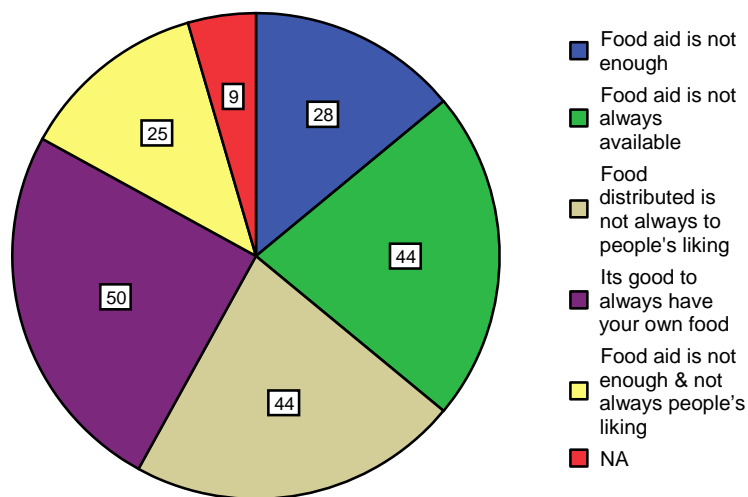


Table 5.6 Reasons for growing one's own food

			Is it true that people don't grow		Total
			Yes	No	
Food aid is not enough	Food aid is not enough	Count	0	28	28
		% of Total	.0%	14.0%	14.0%
	Food aid is not always available	Count	0	44	44
		% of Total	.0%	22.0%	22.0%
	Food distributed is not always to people's liking	Count	0	44	44
		% of Total	.0%	22.0%	22.0%
	Its good to always have your own food	Count	0	50	50
		% of Total	.0%	25.0%	25.0%
	Food aid not enough & not always people's liking	Count	0	25	25
		% of Total	.0%	12.5%	12.5%
	NA	Count	9	0	9
		% of Total	4.5%	.0%	4.5%
Total		Count	9	191	200
		% of Total	4.5%	95.5%	100.0%

More than 95 per cent of the households in the survey did not agree with the allegation that people in Ngabu did not want to grow their own food in their fields while 4,5 per cent agreed citing drought as the reason.

Seventy per cent of the households gave the reasons for growing their own food as food aid not being enough, not always available and not to their liking. Twenty-five per cent said they grew their own food because it was always good to have one's own source.

A large number of the households in Ngabu said they were interested in growing their own food for a number of reasons. They believed it was a good activity of which they could feel proud because they had their own source of food despite the harsh weather conditions in the area. Some cited problems with food aid as a reason for not relying on it completely. They said food aid was not always enough, not always in time, not always reliable and not always to their liking. However, food aid clearly reduced their dignity. Even the food distributors in the NGO focus group discussion (Appendix 5A) agreed that the distributed food was not enough to meet the needs of the whole population in the area. The community leaders and farmers association members of focus group discussions (Appendix 5A) pointed out that the food aid distribution in the area was not always fair because the households were given 50 kg of cereals per household, regardless of the number of household members. The unreliability of food aid could well be justified by the fact that food distribution may be hampered by factors such as poor roads and infrastructure, extreme weather conditions, conflicts, and politics, as discussed in Section 2.3.3.5. However, households' pointing out that food aid was not to their liking even though they received the same type of food they produced in the area might be confusing. The explanation could be that they might have received a different variety of food, such as yellow maize instead of the white maize they were familiar with. As a result, some may have been led to sell the food aid they received so that they could buy the food they were used to.

One needs to note that although food aid may not have been adequate, it has been an important source of food in this area. As seen in the summary below, food aid has played a significant role in the lives of the people of Ngabu; however, to many this is not a significant or the only solution to their problems. The next section discusses the reasons why people still want to produce their own food despite the bad weather conditions.

5.2.5 Food security

Food insecurity in Ngabu is real. Despite the drought, some people still work hard to try and produce their own food. Following is a discussion on the type of food people grow and why.

5.2.5.1 *Reasons for a preference for growing or purchasing food*

Exhibit 5.8 Reasons for buying or growing one's own food

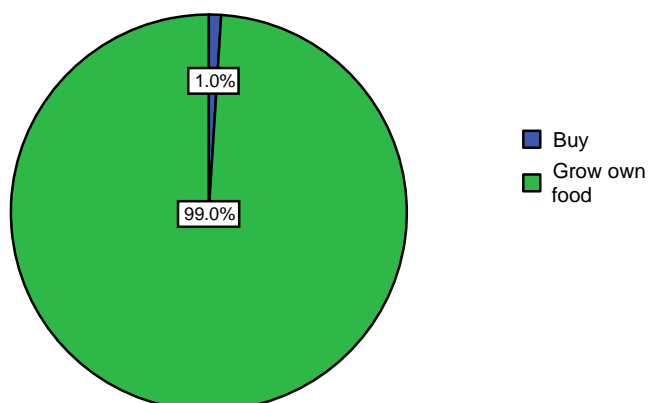


Table 5.7 Reasons for preferring to grow one's own food

			Prefer buying or producing own food		Total
			Buy	Grow own food	
Reasons for preferring growing own food	Its difficult to find food	Count % of Total	0 .0%	8 4.0%	8 4.0%
	Its difficult to find a variety of food in the market	Count % of Total	0 .0%	12 6.0%	12 6.0%
	Its cheaper to grow than to buy	Count % of Total	0 .0%	124 62.0%	124 62.0%
	It feels good to produce your own food	Count % of Total	0 .0%	49 24.5%	49 24.5%
	Can sale some and have money	Count % of Total	0 .0%	1 .5%	1 .5%
	Difficult to find a variety & cheaper to grow than to buy	Count % of Total	0 .0%	4 2.0%	4 2.0%
	NA	Count % of Total	2 1.0%	0 .0%	2 1.0%
Total	Count % of Total	2 1.0%	198 99.0%	200 100.0%	

From Exhibit 5.8 and Table 5.7 above, one concludes that 99 per cent of the surveyed population in Ngabu would prefer producing their own food to buying it. Only two households (1,0 per cent) preferred buying to growing their own food. Apart from the 24,5 per cent who grew their own food because they felt proud to do it, 62 per cent responded that growing was cheaper than buying. Ten per cent had their field as a source of food because it was difficult to find the variety of food they needed in the market.

It is obvious that the people of Ngabu preferred growing their own food to buying it. Malawian culture supports farming. It is the most common source of food and income, and the response of the people in this area is

not surprising. Even though the people of Ngabu do not harvest enough to see them through the year, as pointed out in the Section 5.2.2.2, they would still feel proud and hopeful growing and harvesting their own food. Everyone consulted in special interviews, including those in the NGO focus group discussion, emphasised that people in Ngabu were lazy and did not work hard in their fields: they were discouraged by the bad weather conditions and had come to depend on food aid. All those who took part in the survey would definitely refute this allegation, and they were the ones receiving food aid. One government official (Appendix 5B) disclosed that most people in Ngabu would not tell the truth about their food situation lest they jeopardise their chance of being on the list of food aid beneficiaries. The one household that preferred buying to growing its own food is one of two to three members and is headed by a father. Why it does not have a field and why it obtains all its food from food aid is unclear, but I believe its preference may not have a noticeable impact on the results of the survey in this instance. The other household that preferred buying to growing its own food believed that buying was cheaper than producing. This household was headed by a father and had five to six members. The father did casual labour and received between MK6 000 and MK10 000 (US\$42,86 and US\$71,42) per month. Possibly he does not believe in producing his own food because he can afford to feed his household on his earnings; furthermore, he may not have time to go to the field. The type of food that the people in Ngabu grow in their fields is discussed in the next section.

5.2.5.2 Type and method of growing food despite the drought

Exhibit 5.9 Type of food grown

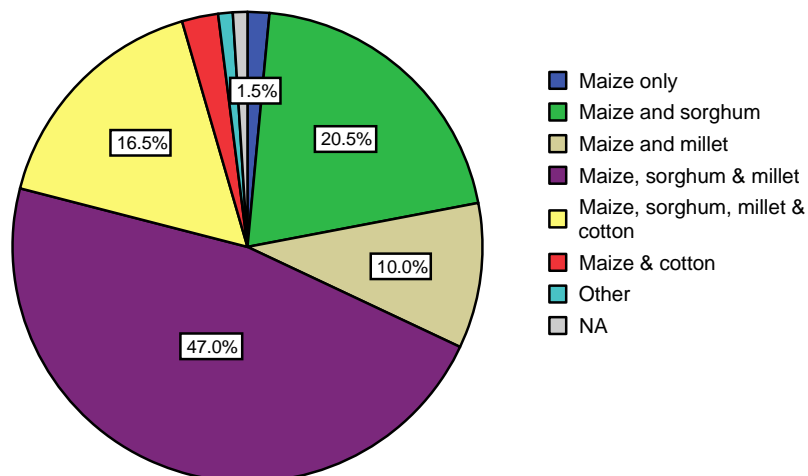


Table 5.8 Type of food and method of cultivation despite the drought

Ways to produce own food considering the drought	Frequency	Percentage
The rains are enough	32	16,0
We use irrigation	1	0,5
We grow drought resistant crops	143	71,5
We have a field in the wetlands	22	11,0
NA	2	1,0
Total	200	100,0

Forty-seven per cent of the population grow maize, sorghum and millet as their food crop, as shown in Exhibit 5.9; 16,5 per cent grow cotton in addition to maize, sorghum and millet while only 1,5 per cent grow maize only. 'Not applicable' ('NA') represents those households that do not grow anything, and 1 per cent grows what is presented as 'other', which is peanuts and cowpeas. Table 5.8 shows that only 16 per cent of the population believe that the rains are enough to grow what they want to

produce. More than 71 per cent grow drought-resistant crops like millet and sorghum while 11 per cent have their field in the wetland regions. Only one household produces its food through irrigation.

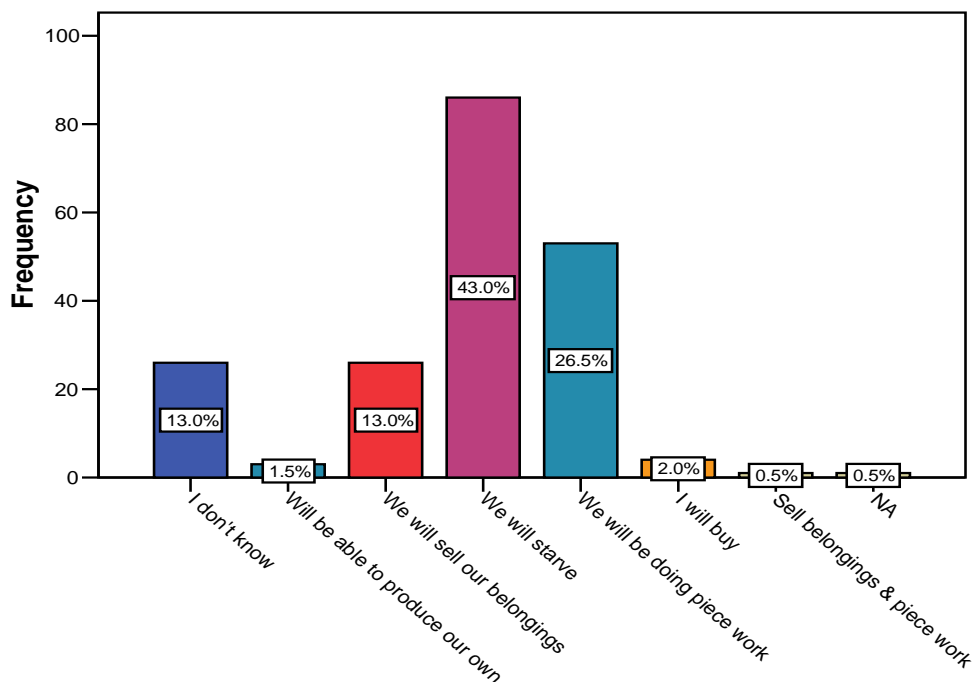
It is not surprising that the majority of the surveyed households consider maize as one of their main food crops despite maize mostly not doing well in this area. Because maize is the people's staple food, as pointed out in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.2, people insist on producing it by growing the drought-resistant variety while some households grow the early-maturing maize type. Millet and sorghum are drought-resistant crops and they are used as a source of food and income when the people produce local beer for sale. The households' insistence on maize might indicate how desperate people are for food. It might also indicate that the people are not well exposed to alternative food sources. A government official in the Department of Animal Husbandry (Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.2) pointed out that livestock production could do well in Ngabu and its surrounding areas, and if people could be encouraged to concentrate on this approach to agriculture, they could feed the whole southern part of Malawi. The other alternative sources of food and income could include cotton production, which does well in this area, in addition to drought-resistant crops such as millet and sorghum. Certain government and church officials confirmed the opinion (Appendixes 5B and 5C) that if people were encouraged to use cotton as a major source of income, people in this area would do better than they currently are doing.

Many people in Ngabu, including the households that were surveyed and the other interviewees, will maintain that food shortage is due to the drought and the dry spells. Interestingly, certain people (similar to the cited 16,5 per cent) still believe the rains are enough for them to grow

their own food, yet none of them has indicated that they have enough food to see them through the year. This fact may suggest that they are happy with this year's harvest, in comparison to past harvests. If other farm inputs such as fertiliser were available, these people would possibly have harvested more. The rest of the population cited growing drought-resistant crops as the answer to their food shortage problem. Eleven per cent of the population were able to produce food for themselves because they grew their crops in the wetlands, or *dimbas*. These areas are in the marshes or valleys or on river banks where simple irrigation is possible. Vegetables are easily grown in these places. Not many, however, have access to such land. It is tempting to conclude that despite the harsh weather conditions, people in Ngabu seem to value their field produce.

5.2.5.3 Survival without food aid

Figure 5.1 Survival without food aid



Forty-three per cent indicated that they would starve if food aid were to stop. Piecework would be a survival mechanism for 26,5 per cent while 13,5 per cent would have to sell their belongings to buy food. Only 1,5 per cent of the households were confident that they would produce their own food and that that would keep them alive.

What would push people to sound so desperate and to simply succumb to starvation if food aid were to stop? That people make statements such as these may indicate that food aid might have been a lifesaver to many households in this area and that people might have become so dependent on food aid that they do not consider any alternative food sources, as many interviewees, such as the government, church and NGO officials, indicated (Appendixes 5B, 5C and 5D). Few households have life insurances in the absence of food aid, such as belongings that they could sell to buy food. However, taking this step would not offer a long-term solution to food insecurity. Some believe piecework could be their lifeline, as seen above (Section 5.1.3.1): Many households' source of income is casual labour. Sadly, only one or two households are confident that their farm produce would save them from starvation in the absence of food aid. Interestingly, these households are headed by mothers and have more than five members. They also have other sources of income, such as businesses or piece jobs.

5.3 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

5.3.1 Food aid and food security in Ngabu

Each finding as determined by the survey questionnaire has been

analysed and discussed. A summary follows of the whole discussion with reference to the main topic: food aid and its impact on food security in Ngabu. The discussion includes the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security in Ngabu and the impact of food aid on vulnerability and food availability, accessibility and utilisation.

5.3.1.1 Food security and causes of food insecurity in Ngabu

Food insecurity in Ngabu could best be described in Maunder's (2006:26) words: 'a chronic livelihoods crisis rather than acute food crisis.' Almost all interviewees agreed that Ngabu was a very food-insecure area and had been for many years (Appendix 5). A government official and a businessman referred to Ngabu's battle with food shortage since 1992.

As the research shows, the main sources of food in this area are farming and supplements of bought food and food aid distribution. Ninety-five per cent of the surveyed households said they would produce their own food if it were not for droughts, floods and other adverse weather conditions, in addition to a lack of land and farm inputs such as fertiliser, seeds and irrigation pumps. Many of them would like to see the government help them more with farm inputs as they prefer growing their own food to receiving free handouts. This statement, however, was refuted by many government officials, church officials and some businessmen (Appendixes 5B, 5C and 5D) who believe that despite the bad weather conditions in Ngabu, people in this area have been made lazy and dependent on food aid and that they do not work hard in their fields to produce their own food. They say these people simply look forward to receiving free food and that they do not appreciate the help the government is giving them to move towards modern agricultural practices, such as putting

fertiliser in their lands. Many people in Ngabu believe that their fields do not need fertiliser and in some cases, this belief has been supported by politicians and village headmen who have even advised their people against following the extension workers' agricultural advice (see Appendix 5B and 5C) on modern farming methods lest they do not qualify as recipients of food aid.

Undoubtedly, food insecurity in Ngabu is caused mainly by the bad weather. This was proven beyond a doubt by the survey, the group discussions and the special interviews. The Ngabu weather conditions are characterised by dry spells that dry up the young crops in the fields, floods that wash away the surviving crops and occasional absences of rain that occur in crucial times. According to many interviewees (Appendix 1B), people in Ngabu are able to plant their crops in two seasons: in the rainy season, if the rains are good, and in the dry season, if irrigation is well established. Apart from the unpredictable climate, food insecurity is compounded by low productivity among smallholder farmers, poor utilisation of the available food and high post-harvest losses, as pointed out in Section 3.5. Crop production in the area is below the national average for most of the key crops, including sorghum, millet, groundnuts and beans. Cotton is the only crop whose yield reached the lower average of potential yield. Post-harvest losses mainly in maize, sorghum and millet are caused by pest attacks and disease and are encountered during processing; shelling and storage; theft, fires and floods; and transportation from crop fields to homesteads and markets. Although most people of the area do not favour the application of inorganic fertilisers claiming that their soils are fertile, these soils do indeed need an external application of nutrients.

Another contributing factor to food insecurity in this area, as in many other parts of Malawi (see Section 3.2.2), is lack of land (see Section 5.2.2.3 above). Of the 99 per cent of households who would prefer to grow their own food, 61 per cent have less than one acre of field while 2,5 per cent do not have their own fields and they may have to rent. These numbers suggest that many households do not have enough land to diversify their agricultural methods. Certain interviewed government officials and businessmen (Appendixes 1B and 1D), however, attributed Ngabu's food insecurity to people's mentality and laziness. They argue that if it were not for laziness and dependency on food aid, people in Ngabu would not have been in the state they are in now. They believe that if only the very needy were to be considered as food aid beneficiaries, the rest would work hard in their fields for their survival.

5.3.1.2 Malawi government's approach to food security in Ngabu

According to the results of the special interviews, the respondents are divided in their opinion about the government's approach to food security in Ngabu. Many believe that the government is not doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in the area. Some even maintain that food aid has contributed to food insecurity because it has caused the government to relax over the issue and wait for NGOs to solve the problem (Appendixes 5B and 5D). Maunder (2006:13) writes that this is the case with many governments. He points out that large-scale external assistance may dissuade governments from taking their own steps and using their own resources to tackle problems of food insecurity. Many say that the government is trying but that its attempts are insufficient as people need much more than only food aid (Appendix 5).

The government's approach to addressing food security issues in Ngabu is not very different from that in the rest of the country. Apart from heeding donors' request for assistance, the government has pursued various initiatives including strategies aimed at stimulating agricultural production, promoting small businesses, bringing about land reform and introducing productive safety nets. Apart from the aid it gives to the food distribution through NGOs, the government's support for the agricultural sector has not been tangible in Ngabu, as Maunder (2006:13) found in his research on the impact of food aid on grain markets in southern Africa, including those in Malawi. He points out that governments sometimes under-invest in long-term agricultural development and that strong political incentives serve to perpetuate food aid. WV as a food aid distributor is directed by the government through the chiefs about the areas that need food distribution. Furthermore, the identification of food aid beneficiaries is done with the support of village headmen and community leaders.

The food distributed in Ngabu is, however, not enough to meet the people' needs. This fact has been pointed out by almost everyone surveyed and interviewed and may suggest that in time of hunger, more food has to be distributed than it is now. Not every household has access to food aid. According to the discussion with the Cotton Farmers' Association, which is in an area that does not receive food aid, the government is not fair in its choice of area eligible for food aid. (See Appendix 5B.) They complained that the chiefs, who give the names and numbers of needy people in their villages, are sometimes greedy and unfair in their choice.

Despite Malawi's having a great deal of food this year, people are still at risk of food insecurity during the current consumption period, as pointed

out in Section 3.3. The government may therefore require close monitoring because people could become food-insecure if an economic shock were to push maize prices beyond the acceptable price.

5.3.1.3 *Food aid in Ngabu*

Food aid has been a reliable food source for many households in Ngabu for the past five years. According to the survey (Exhibit 5.1), a large percentage of the population has been receiving food aid this year alone. Some grow their own food, others buy in addition to receiving food aid and a very small number of households rely entirely on food aid as a source of food. Only 17 per cent of the households do not receive food aid, and the other 14 per cent of the surveyed ones rely entirely on their own grown and bought food. As pointed out earlier, apart from some churches and a few businessmen, WV has been the sole food aid distributor in Ngabu since September 2002. According to the WV food distribution coordinator, the organisation has distributed 169 186 metric tons of assorted food (50 kg cereals, 5 kg pulses and 1,85 kg vegetable oils per household per month) this year (2007). The organisation has done this through FFW programmes whereby the community works for the food it receives. For example, in this area people have planted trees and cleared roads in exchange for food. Food aid, though not enough to meet each household's need, has played a significant role in the lives of people in the Ngabu area.

Malawi has reported a bumper yield in the year 2006/7, and the total maize production is estimated at 2,6 million metric (MT), according to FEWS NET (2007:3). However, despite this good production at the national level, certain areas did not do well owing to floods and prolonged dry

spells in the middle of the growing season. The affected areas include the Chikwawa district, where Ngabu is situated. Therefore, food aid is still being distributed in this area and this situation might continue for some time.

5.3.1.4 Malawi government's approach to food aid in Ngabu

The Malawi government's approach to food security and food aid has been remarkable, as discussed in Chapter 3, Sections 3 and 4. In addressing food aid issues in Ngabu, the government's approach has not been very different from its approach to food security. Its main solution to a food crisis has been to request food aid from donor countries, in addition to importing food for distribution among people in need.

Ngabu is an area where the government has resorted to massive amounts of food relief through NGOs to feed its population after the severe drought- or flood-induced crop failures. The surveyed and interviewed members of the population agree with this observation. The government has partnered with the WFP, an organisation that distributes food through WVI in an attempt to address food shortage problems in Ngabu, as pointed out in Section 5.2.4.1.

With the current bumper yield in Malawi, the government may have to change its approach to food aid. It may not need to request food from outside donors but may still have to request funds to buy food for Ngabu from areas that have surplus food.

5.3.1.5 *Impact of food aid on food security in Ngabu*

The impact food aid has had on people's lives in Ngabu has been remarkable. The survey and the interviews have shown that the impact has been both positive and negative.

As has been pointed out, Ngabu is a drought- and flood-prone area and food aid has helped greatly in times of emergency. Compare this observation with the statements by Shaw (2001:1) in Section 2.2.4. Food aid has surely saved many lives and everyone interviewed emphasised that if food aid were to stop, many people would suffer (see Section 5.2.2.3 and Appendix 5). Food aid has alleviated the suffering of vulnerable members of the population, including the sick, old and orphaned in Ngabu.

In support of the observations by Makenete et al (1998:253) in Section 2.2.4, one has to state that food aid has improved food security in Ngabu by raising the dietary status, nutrition and consumption of many households. This has contributed to the health status of the people, especially the sick. Many in Ngabu are affected by HIV/AIDS, and this group has been targeted. According to the interviewed WV food aid distribution coordinator, food aid has contributed to a reduction in malnutrition-related diseases, school dropouts, early marriages by young girls and child labour practices in Ngabu.

Community leaders and farmers' association members in focus group discussions, as well as many other interviewees, agree that food aid has had a significant positive effect on food production by raising labour

productivity. People have been empowered and have the energy to go and work in their fields. This view is supported by Lavy (1990), Sijm (1997:464) (Section 2.2.4) and Maunder (2006:12), who indicate that certain arguments suggest that food aid can increase the supply of labour and contribute to increased agricultural production. It is also believed that the income transfer provided through food aid frees poor households from the necessity of seeking short-term casual labour opportunities to meet immediate consumption needs. This is the situation in Ngabu where people, instead of pursuing casual work in their search for food, have the time and energy to work in their own fields. This observation has been corroborated by many interviewees (see Exhibit 2 and Tables 5.1 to 5.4). In the presence of food aid that may act as an effective form of insurance against potential production losses, farmers in Africa have been known to adopt production-maximising behaviour (Maunder 2006:13)

As discussed in Section 2.2.4, the EU (European Commission 2000:3) pointed out that food aid could be used as an indirect means of providing support or as an incentive for initiatives in community and economic development. This statement applies to Ngabu. According to the WV food aid distribution coordinator (Section 5.2.4.1), food aid-sponsored projects run by WV in the area have encouraged the creation of community assets, such as village woodlands, and of infrastructures, such as feeder roads. Maunder's (2006:vii) assertion that food aid increases net household incomes while releasing resources for investment in agricultural inputs has been proven to be true in Ngabu. Some of the money that households would have used to buy food has been channelled to farm inputs such as fertiliser and seeds.

Despite food aid's having had a positive impact on households in Ngabu, it has also affected the community negatively. It has created laziness and food aid dependency, as Raffer and Singer (1996:82) point out (Section 2.2.4). All the interviewees in special interviews, including the NGO focus group discussion, emphasise that people in Ngabu have become lazy and do not work hard in their fields because they are assured of food aid when they do not harvest sufficiently. They have become so dependent on food aid that some people would wait for disasters and would sometimes even put themselves in positions whereby they become victims of disasters so that they are eligible for food aid (Appendix 5). According to a government official, some people reportedly refused to be evacuated from a flood-prone area as this could jeopardise their chances of being eligible for food aid. One important businessman even attributed food insecurity to the availability of food aid. He believed that despite the adverse weather conditions of the area, people could be able to produce enough food to feed themselves and even export to other parts of the country, if they were willing to follow advice. Government and church officials (Appendixes 5B and 5C) pointed out that if the people could concentrate on growing crops that did well in this area, such as cotton, millet and sorghum, they would be able to harvest enough. Moreover, many suggest that irrigation could boost food production in the area. Others suggest livestock production as an alternative to food insecurity in Ngabu. This area does very well in animal husbandry. 'How could Ngabu be this food-insecure for all these years without people learning and changing to other means of survival?' a businessman lamented.

According to Raffer and Singer (1996:82) (Section 2.2.4), food aid induces the recipient governments to use food aid as an alternative to the much more difficult task of increasing food production. Maunder (2006:13)

points out that large-scale external assistance may dissuade governments from taking their own steps and using their own resources to tackle problems of food insecurity. In other cases, food aid allows politicians to divert voters' attention from their failure to address increasing vulnerability over the long term and to resist pressure to relinquish control to the private sector. Although their attitude was not extensively researched, almost all interviewees emphasised their dissatisfaction with the government's poor attempts to help the people of Ngabu out of the cycle of poverty and food shortage (Appendix 1). In the next chapter, I discuss the people's expectations in regard to the government.

Despite some people's advocating food aid as an important food source and as an addition to food production, many interviewees believed that food aid discouraged food production. This opinion is in accordance with that of Maunder (2006:vi), Raffer and Singer (1996:83) and Sijm (1997:465) (see Section 2.2.4), who believe that food aid may be a disincentive to domestic agricultural production which, in turn, perpetuates the requirement for food aid. All government officials, church officials and members of the NGO focus group discussion and some interviewed businesspersons believed that food aid had contributed to the low production of food crops because food aid offered people an alternative. Interestingly, all those who advocated food aid as an aid to food production were members of the community who had been surveyed: the community leaders, the farmers association members and some small-business owners, who are part of the community itself (see Appendix 5). Ninety-five per cent of the people surveyed refuted allegations that food aid discouraged them from growing their own crops, possibly suggesting that the people have come to believe that they can work hard in their fields only when they have food aid. This may be a sure

sign of dependency.

Another negative impact of food aid on food security in Ngabu, as pointed out by some, is its tendency to hinder and discourage community development projects. The farmers association focus group (Appendix 5A) pointed out that food aid caused division among communities. When food aid was allocated to only a few chosen communities, the others felt resentful and therefore did not want to participate in development activities in the area. Community members attributed this unfair distribution of food to the chiefs who were involved in the identification of people eligible for food aid, and this accusation caused enmity among the chiefs, village headmen and local people.

The last negative impact food aid has on the people of Ngabu is that they believe it has made the government neglect its duties in the area and wait for the NGO to do the work, as pointed out in Section 5.3.1.2. A church official (Appendixes 5B and 5C) emphasised that the government needed to encourage people to be self-reliant in food matters rather than being satisfied with the NGO's distributing food supplies in the area each year.

The discussion above dealt with the general impact of food aid on food security in Ngabu, but the following section pays attention to its specific impact on local markets in Ngabu and on the availability, accessibility and utilisation of food as components of food security (Section 2.3.2.1).

5.3.1.6 Impact of food aid on food availability

Food availability has been described in Section 2.3.2.1.1 as the provision

of a sufficient supply of food to all people at all times. As discussed above, food in Ngabu could not be described as such. It is not readily available because of the natural disasters that destroy the people's harvest, and food aid has undoubtedly had a positive impact on food availability in this area. One needs to reiterate that 6,5 per cent of the population rely entirely on food aid for survival, confirming that they would be doomed if it were not for food aid being made available to them. FANTA (2006:1) agrees and points out (Section 2.3.2.1.1) that food availability means sufficient quantities of appropriate, necessary types of food from donors, in addition to local production and commercial imports that are consistently available to individuals in reasonable proximity to them. As mentioned earlier, apart from the food aid distributed by churches, 169186 metric tons of food was allocated to Ngabu as food aid from WFP through WV this year alone. Although certain people sell food items they received as food aid, as pointed out by government and church officials (Appendixes 5B and 5C), the food is being sold in the same area making it available to others in the same region. It was discovered that some of the maize sold on the market had been imported by local businesspersons from neighbouring Mozambique as it was cheaper than maize imported from other parts of Malawi. I believe this trend will not continue as Malawi now has an abundance of maize from local production. According to Malawi (2007:8), maize of the 2005/2006 growing season was estimated at 3,2 million metric tons and that of the 2006/2007 season was estimated at an increase of 23 per cent. According to Phiri (2007c:9), food prices have gone down so much that farmers in other parts of Malawi are worried that they will not receive much from their harvest this year.

5.3.1.7 Impact of food aid on food accessibility

In Section 2.3.2.1.2, it was explained that food accessibility refers to the way in which people acquire food. According to the survey (Figure 5.1), only 46 per cent of the surveyed households are able to acquire food through their own harvest and purchase while 54 per cent have access to food aid as a supplement to their own food or as their entire food source. People's income in Ngabu is very low. FANTA (2006:1) (Section 2.3.2.1.2) presents food accessibility as individuals' having adequate incomes or other resources to purchase the levels of appropriate foods needed to maintain consumption of an adequate diet. Evidently, this notion does not apply to Ngabu. Most families here access food by consuming what they produce or by purchasing food from the income from casual farm labour or off-farm work. Seventy per cent of the people surveyed spent 70 per cent of their income on food, and almost more than half of their expenditure was the monetary value of grown food they consumed themselves. They purchased the balance of their food requirements from the market when the household stocks were depleted. This could be a clear pointer that food accessibility through purchasing is not easy. That 85 per cent of the population surveyed have had access to food aid in the past six months could therefore be a clear indication that food accessibility has been made possible in Ngabu through food aid that has played a significant role in many households. Food aid has made food accessible to all the needy people, including the sick, elderly and orphaned.

Food accessibility, as mentioned in Section 5.2.4.2, is sometimes hindered by the poor road infrastructure in the area. Heavy rains and floods impact

negatively on food distribution. However, according to the WV food aid coordinator, the food aid distributed by WV has not been seriously affected.

5.3.1.8 Impact of food aid on food utilisation

Contrary to Raffer and Singer's (1996:84) belief that food aid promotes an undesirable shift in consumption patterns away from traditional local staple food towards the commodities supplied as food aid, almost the whole surveyed and interviewed population say they receive the type of food they normally eat. People in the area usually grow maize as their staple food, in addition to sorghum and millet. This is the same type of food distributed by WV and commonly found in local markets. One could therefore conclude that the food the people receive as food aid could be nutrients that are easily consumed and properly digested and absorbed, in agreement with Section 2.3.2.1.3.

As stated in Section 2.3.2.1.3, Madziakapita (2004:9) refers to food utilisation as the actual consumption of food of sufficient quality and quantity to provide adequate energy and nutrients to the members of households. This was seen to be true with the food aid distributed in Ngabu. Although food aid might not have provided an adequate quantity, according to many interviewed households and the food distribution coordinator, it has provided nutritive value to school-going children and to the sick and the elderly and energy to the labour force of the area. To some, however, this food aid could not be well utilised, as Section 5.2.4.2 points out: Some 12,5 per cent of the households would prefer to produce their own food because the food aid is not to their liking. This might indicate that the food they receive might have fallen

short of utilisation. According to Koc et al (2007:3), efforts to provide food without paying attention to the symbolic role of food in people's lives have failed to solve food-security problems.

5.3.1.9 Impact of food aid on food vulnerability

As stated in Section 2.3.2.1.4, Benson (2004:8) points out that food security incorporates a notion that a household does not need to sacrifice the long-term ability to be food-secure for short-term needs. A good example is when the time for food production is traded for that for food hunting. In Ngabu, a cycle of food insecurity persists because many able-bodied household members spend their time doing piecework (casual labour) in other people's fields in exchange for food or cash instead of working to produce their own food in their own fields. Benson (2004:8) confirms this opinion and points out (Section 5.2.4.4) that when people are unable to acquire sufficient food using their regular means of access to food, they will employ a sequence of coping strategies to meet their food needs. Vulnerability then comes in when a household has to sacrifice the long-term ability of its members to acquire sufficient food in order to meet current, short-term needs. It is argued that if food aid is managed in the context of long-term safety nets that respond to chronic vulnerability, it is easier to avoid the market and product disincentive (Maunder 2006:10).

Vulnerability portrays the notion of sustainability, which unfortunately has not been seen in Ngabu where people still expect free food every year. Sustaining food security in Ngabu is questionable as food aid has not managed to teach people to depend on their own food production, possibly because people do not need food aid but farm inputs to help them harvest their own crops. However, one could ask why people would

sell fertiliser and seeds given to them by the government, as government officials pointed out (Appendixes 5B and 5C). It is highly tempting to conclude that many households in this area are chronically vulnerable to food insecurity as they do not rely on their own fields or other means of their own for survival.

5.3.1.10 Impact of food aid on local markets

Many authors, such as Maunder (2006:vi), Shah (2003:3), the European Commission (2000:10), Raffer and Singer (1996:83) and Sijm (1997:465), have shown concern (Section 2.2.4) that food aid may discourage domestic food production, disrupt local markets by driving prices down, discourage private sector investment in the market of staple foods, reduce beneficiaries' sense of responsibility and cause economic inefficiency, leading to the destruction of the local economy.

In Ngabu, four of the five businesspersons interviewed (see Appendix 5D) pointed out that people sold at a loss when food aid was available and that they made good sales when there was no food aid and the demand for food items was high. Two said they did not necessarily see any change in their markets in terms of price or demand when food aid was present. One even attributed the good sales of his items to the presence of food aid as they were complementary food aid items. One could suggest that the difference in response could be due to the difference in business. Two of the three who said they made good sales when there was no food aid were maize sellers. Because maize is the staple food of the area, it is distributed as food aid. One could suggest that when many people are provided with free food, they have no need to go and buy it from the market. The fish seller, however, supports the distribution of food aid as fish

is not on the list of food being handed out and it complements the food given as food aid. This opinion agrees with that of Maunder (2006:11), who believes that food aid, although enhancing income, may have a positive impact on the demand for complementary products.

It is interesting to discover that four of the interviewed businesspersons would encourage food aid distribution in the area, possibly suggesting that the difference they encountered in their sales in the absence or presence of food aid might be minimal. The explanation could be that in Ngabu, food aid might be replacing the bad harvest, of which the impact on the markets would be unnoticeable.

Maunder (2006:11) concludes that there is very little evidence of the impact of food aid on local market development. He maintains that if food aid effectively targeted poor and hungry recipients who do not otherwise have the resources to buy food on the market, consumption will increase and the impact of food aid on the market will not be extensive. In agreement with this statement, it would be tempting to conclude that the impact of food aid on the Ngabu markets is minimal and food aid would generally not contribute to the destruction of the economy in the area.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Ngabu is a food-insecure area because of several factors, including bad weather conditions and limited government intervention. Agriculture is the most reliable source of food and is followed by food aid which is, however, not enough to meet the people' needs.

The government's main approach to the food crisis has been to request food aid from donor countries for distribution among the people in need. The impact of food aid in Ngabu has been both positive and negative. On the positive side, food aid has helped greatly in times of emergency. Food aid has provided energy to the people to go and work in their fields, and it has encouraged them to create community assets. On the negative side, food aid has led to laziness and food aid dependency on the part of the people of Ngabu and has contributed to low production. The availability of organisations that provide food aid has also made the government relax the execution of its duties. Many believe that the government is not doing enough to alleviate the food shortage in the area.

The impact of food aid on the Ngabu markets, however, has been minimal and food aid could not contribute to the destruction of the economy of the area.

The following chapter provides concluding remarks and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

An evaluation of the impact of food aid on food security was carried out specifically in the Ngabu area in the southern part of Malawi. This region was an ideal choice for this evaluation as it constantly receives food aid because of its weather conditions. The whole evaluation was based on specific objectives, which were to understand what food aid and food security are; to investigate the causes of food insecurity in Malawi and specifically in Ngabu; and to investigate the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security. The objectives for Ngabu specifically were to determine the factors that led to food aid distribution in the area; to evaluate the impact of food aid on food availability, food accessibility and food utilisation in Ngabu; and to evaluate the impact of food aid on the local markets of the Ngabu area.

This chapter concludes the research. The study introduced the background and objectives in Chapter 1, explored the general concepts of food aid and food security in Chapter 2, discussed Malawi as the country in which the evaluation took place in Chapter 3, outlined and discussed the research methodology in Chapter 4 and presented and discussed the findings in Chapter 5. This chapter makes recommendations on the basis of the findings and conclusions described in Chapter 5.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings, which were presented and discussed in Chapter 5, are summarised and presented below and are followed by recommendations.

6.2.1 Food security in Ngabu

- (a) Ngabu is food-insecure and mostly suffers from a food shortage that is due to harsh weather conditions such as floods and dry spells. Five years prior to the survey, people in Ngabu continuously harvested very little from their fields.
- (b) Causes of food insecurity in Ngabu include droughts, floods, dry spells and lack of arable land, and these factors led to food aid distribution in the Ngabu area.
- (c) People in Ngabu area do not want to work hard in their fields and they are reluctant to change their farming methods. They are not easily convinced that modern methods of farming are important for them to improve food production.
- (d) People in Ngabu rely heavily on food aid and assistance from outside.
- (e) People sell their harvest without thinking about the future, even if they are left with insufficient food. They do so because they lack cash for other household needs.
- (f) Not much is being done by the government in terms of a long-term solution to the problem of food shortage, as pointed out in Section 5.3.1.2.
- (g) People in Ngabu are generally poor.

6.2.2 Malawi government's approach to food insecurity in Ngabu

1. The government's general approach to food insecurity in Ngabu has been to encourage NGOs to provide food aid.
2. Although not an extensive one, another government approach to issues of food insecurity in this area is to encourage agricultural production by teaching people modern methods of farming through agricultural extension workers. The government has struggled to convince people in the area to embrace change and embark on modern methods of agriculture to improve their harvest.
3. Another government's approach is the provision of the regulated food markets known as Agricultural Development Marketing Corporation (ADMARC); it buys maize and other food crops from farmers and sells it to the people, as pointed out in section 3.3.
4. At a certain stage, the government provided the people with packages of farm inputs including seeds and fertiliser to help farmers plant their own food crops.
5. The government helps cotton farmers by setting good selling prices for cotton and encouraging companies to buy more.
6. The government has not invested much in long-term solutions to the problem of food shortage in this area.
7. The Department of Agriculture is greatly understaffed.
8. Many people are dissatisfied with the government's methods of intervening in their crisis.

6.2.3 Food aid in Ngabu

1. Ngabu has had food distributed as food aid for more than five years.
2. WV has been the main food aid distributor and has been supported by the Malawi government in conjunction with the WFP since September 2002.
3. People do not harvest enough to see them through the year and therefore food aid is very much appreciated.
4. Food aid has been of tremendous help in times of emergencies caused by natural disasters. It has helped save and improve many people's lives, especially those of the sick, the old and the orphaned.
5. Food aid has empowered the people of Ngabu and has given them energy to work in their fields.
6. Food aid has created jobs for distributors employed by the NGO.
7. In some cases, food aid has been seen as a disincentive to food production in the area. It has contributed to a change in people's attitude toward self-reliance as they are assured of free food even when they do not work hard in their fields.
8. Food aid may also have contributed to people's dependency on outside help when they are in crisis. Some have even tried to put themselves in vulnerable positions to become eligible for help.
9. In other cases, food aid created division and enmity in the community and hindered community development projects. People who had been omitted from the list of food aid beneficiaries became bitter and did not want to participate in development activities taking place in the area.
10. NGO workers continue food distribution simply to secure their jobs.

6.2.4 Malawi government's approach to food aid in Ngabu

1. The Malawi government encouraged food aid distribution in Ngabu and was involved in the choice of areas that needed to be supported with food aid.
2. The government provided further support to the NGOs by requesting assistance from the WFP.

6.2.5 Impact of food aid on food availability

1. Food aid has had a positive impact on food availability. It has significantly contributed to food being available in the area.
2. Food aid, in addition to local production, has created food availability in sufficient quantities of appropriate types in reasonable proximity to the people.
3. Apart from the food aid distributed by churches, WFP has distributed 169 186 metric tons through WV this year alone.

6.2.6 Impact of food aid on food accessibility

1. Food aid has played a significant role in making food accessible to many households in Ngabu.
2. In Ngabu, people do not have adequate incomes, and therefore the purchasing of food as a food source cannot provide the appropriate nutrients needed to maintain an adequate diet.
3. Most families in Ngabu access food by consuming what they produce or by purchasing food with the income earned from casual farm labour or off-farm work.
4. Food aid has made food accessible mainly to vulnerable people including the sick, the elderly and the orphaned.

6.2.7 Impact of food aid on food utilisation

1. Food aid seems to have no noticeable impact on food utilisation as there is no undesirable shift in consumption patterns away from traditional local food.
2. Food aid has provided nutritive value to school-going children and to the sick and the elderly and has given energy to the labour force of the area.

6.2.8 Impact of food aid on vulnerability

1. Food aid may have contributed to the community's vulnerability to food shortage in Ngabu as people expect free food every year.
2. Sustaining food security through own food production is questionable in Ngabu as able-bodied household members spend most of their time doing piecework instead of working in their fields.

6.2.9 Impact of food aid on local markets in Ngabu

Food aid seems to have had no noticeable impact on the local markets because it simply seems to replace a bad harvest.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are made on the basis of the findings and conclusions above. Many of the recommendations were derived from people's comments when they were asked what they would like to see the government do (Appendix 5).

6.3.1 Recommendations for the government

According to the findings and conclusions above, there are some issues the government need to address. The following are some recommendations.

1. The Malawi government needs to do a great deal more to address the issues of food insecurity in Ngabu and the surrounding area.
2. The government needs to investigate and be clear on what people in this area really want.
3. The government needs to commit to helping and empowering people to produce enough food from their fields through modern farming practices. Although people are slow to change, some do take the advice and help seriously.
4. The government should teach and encourage irrigation farming and help people acquire irrigation equipment such as pumps.
5. The government seriously needs to provide enough skilled human resources, especially in agriculture, and maintain them.
6. The government should increase funding for agricultural programmes.
7. The government could help farmers with loans for fertilisers, pesticides and equipment to press cotton seeds into oil, as the cotton farmers wish.
8. The government should look into other approaches to food security, such as intensifying livestock production, which could do well in this area.
9. The creation of farmers associations such as a cotton growers association and a livestock association should be encouraged, and they should be equipped as they provide an effective learning environment to farmers.

10. Livestock farming should be supported, and farmers should be assisted to protect their animals against thieves as theft has discouraged some. Farmers should also be assisted in establishing good markets to sell at a profit.
11. As a long-term solution to crises caused by serious disasters such as floods, people could be moved to better locations to avoid loss of lives and assets; for example, people could be moved from flood-prone places to high land.
12. The government should improve infrastructure such as roads and bridges; this step would contribute to more efficient transportation of farm produce and lead to improved food availability and accessibility in the area.
13. As far as the selling of food by ADMAC is concerned, the government should provide smaller bags of maize for sale to those who cannot afford the large 50 kg ones.

6.3.2 Recommendations for non-governmental organisations

The research findings pointed some issues that the non-governmental organisations might have to take into account when carrying out their programs in Ngabu area.

1. People appreciate food aid in times of crisis but would prefer to produce their own; therefore, the approach should be to help them with farm inputs.
2. Food aid should be a short-term solution. People should not expect to receive long-term food aid and should be encouraged to produce their own food.

3. NGOs need to use other approaches to food distribution, such as people working for assets or being given animals to farm since livestock do well in this area. Distributing cash instead of food and thereby allowing people to buy the food they need locally is gaining ground among aid agencies, as pointed out by SARPN (2007:1).
4. When a list of people eligible for food aid is compiled, care should be taken to choose all the people who need help to avoid division among members of the community.

6.3.3 Recommendations for the Ngabu community

The community in Ngabu might have to consider some issues in order to improve their every day lives.

1. Community members need to change their mindset about food aid and work towards self-sufficiency.
2. Community leaders should encourage their people to work hard in their fields, do away with their old farming practices and adhere to modern methods of farming such as applying fertiliser or manure in their fields.
3. Households should learn not to sell everything when they harvest and to think of the future.
4. The community should take the initiative to come up with ways of improving their livelihoods and should not wait for someone to do it for them; for example, they should protect their crops against domestic animals. The farmers associations set a good example.

6.3.4 Recommendations for further research

Further research is recommended in the following areas:

1. Sustainable productive farming approaches suitable to Ngabu
2. Further ways of helping the people of Ngabu to produce their own food
3. Additional food aid distribution approaches that would be suitable for Ngabu
4. Further solutions to food insecurity in Ngabu

6.4 CONCLUSION

The research objectives of the study were to understand what food aid and food security entail; to investigate the causes of food insecurity; to investigate the Malawi government's approach to food aid and food security; to determine the factors that led to food aid distribution in the Ngabu area; to evaluate the impact of food aid on food availability, access and utilisation in the Ngabu region; and to evaluate the impact of food aid on the local markets in the Ngabu area.

The primary research problem was that food aid distribution has been used as a solution to food insecurity in Ngabu for a long time, yet not much has been done to research whether or not this approach to food insecurity is suited to the area. Moreover, the government's approach to food insecurity in Ngabu has not been critically evaluated to see whether it has had the intended results or whether the food aid approach has contributed to people's dependency on food aid, changed the people's eating habits, contributed to food production in the area or disrupted the local markets.

The outcome of the evaluation, as discussed in Chapter 5, has been interesting. Food aid has had both a positive and a negative impact on food security in the area. The impact of food aid in Ngabu has been extremely positive, especially in times of crisis. Food aid has helped save and improve many people's lives, especially those of the sick, the old and the orphaned. Food aid has provided energy to the many people in Ngabu to go and work in their fields and has sometimes contributed to an increase in food production. It has encouraged the creation of community assets and has provided jobs for distributors employed by the NGO. The negative impacts of food aid on food security in the Ngabu area include a resulting laziness and food aid dependency and low food production in the fields. Food aid has contributed to people's change in attitude towards self-reliance while the government has become relaxed and neglects its duties because it is assured that something is being done: food aid is being distributed to the needy. Many people wish that the government could do more to alleviate the problem of food shortage in the area.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, Ngabu was chosen as a case study and the results of the evaluation do not necessarily relate to the whole of Malawi even though they could possibly apply to some parts of the country. Further study is recommended in the other areas affecting Ngabu, as pointed out above.

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APPENDIX 1 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

3.2.3 Household Survey 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 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 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 – Personal information

1.1 Who is the head of this household?

- a) Father
- b) Mother
- c) Child
- d) Grandparent
- e) Relative
- f) Other _____

1.2 How big is your household?

- a) 1 - 2 members
- b) 3 - 4 members
- c) 5 - 6 members
- d) 6 - 7 members
- e) 8 and more

Section 2 - Source of Food

2.1 What are your sources of food?

- a) We grow our own food
- b) We buy our food

- c) We grow and also buy our food
- d) We are given by relatives and friends
- e) We receive all as aid from the Government and NGOs
- f) We grow, buy and receive food aid
- g) Other Specify _____

2.2 Do you have a field?

- Yes No N/a

2.3 If yes to question 2 above, what is the size of your field?

- a) 0 - 0.5 hectares
- b) 0.6 - 1 hectares
- c) 2 - 5 hectares
- d) 6 - 10 hectares
- e) More than 11 hectares

2.4 If yes to question 2 above, how much food do you normally harvest?

- a) Enough for the whole year round
- b) Enough for half of the year
- c) Enough for quarter of a year
- d) Not enough for a month

2.5 How many meals do you have per day?

- a) One meal
- b) Two meals
- c) Three meals
- d) More than three meals

Section 3 – Source of Income

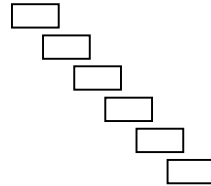
3.1 What is your source of income apart from a full time job?

- a) Selling farm produce
- b) Selling animal produce
- c) Piece work
- d) Business
- e) Fishing
- f) A relative sends money

g) Other _____

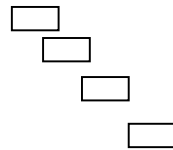
3.2 How much do you make per month?

- a) Less than K1 000
- b) K1 000 – K5 000
- c) K6 000 – K10 000
- d) K11 000 – K20 000
- e) More than K20,000



3.3 How much of the income is used on food?

- a) 10 - 20 percent
- b) 30 - 40 percent
- c) 50 - 60 percent
- d) 70 onwards

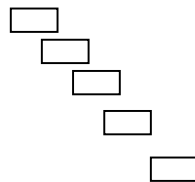


3.4 Does any of the household member have a full time job?

Yes No

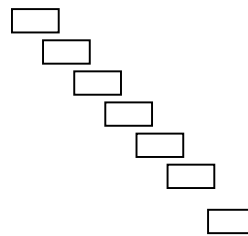
3.5 If yes to question 3.4 above, which member of the household works?

- a) Father
- b) Mother
- c) Son
- d) Daughter
- e) Relative



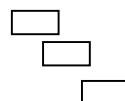
3.7 How much does she / he receive?

- f) Less than K1 000
- g) K1 000 – K5 000
- h) K6 000 – K10 000
- i) K11 000 – K20 000
- j) More than K20,000
- k) Not willing to disclose



3.8 How much of the income is used on food?

- e) 10 - 20 percent
- f) 30 - 40 percent



- g) 50 - 60 percent
- h) 70 onward

Section 4 – Food Aid

4.1 Are you receiving food aid from agencies?

Yes No

4.2 If yes to question (4.1) above, which agencies supply you with food?

- a) The Government
- b) The church
- c) The NGOs
- d) Other Specify _____

4.3 If yes in question (4.1) above, how many times have you received food aid in the last six months?

- a) Once
- b) Twice
- c) Three times
- d) More than three times

4.4 What type of food do you receive from the agencies as food aid?

- a) Maize or maize flour
- b) Beans
- c) Sorghum
- d) Cooking oil
- e) Sugar and salt

4.5 Some say here people don't want to grow their own food; they just want to receive free food, is it true or not?

Yes it's true No it's not true

4.6 If yes to question (4.5) above, why?

- a) People receive enough food at the right time
- b) They like the kind of food we receive

- c) They have enough money and we can easily find food in the market
- d) No need to go back to the field because of drought
- e) Other Specify _____

4.7 If no to question (4.5) above, why?

- a) Food aid is not enough
- b) Food aid is not always available
- c) Food distributed is not always to people's liking
- d) Its good to always have your own food
- e) Other Specify _____

Section 5- Food Security

5.1 Would you prefer to buy or produce your own food?

- a) Buy
- b) Grow own food
- c) Not Applicable

5.2 If the answer is a) in question (5.1) above, why would you prefer buying to growing own food?

- a) Its easy to find food
- b) Its easy to find a variety of food in the market
- c) Its cheaper to buy than to grow
- d) The drought makes it impossible to produce even if we wanted to
- e) Other Specify _____

5.3 If the answer is b) in question above (5.1), why would you prefer growing own food to buying?

- a) Its difficult to find food
- b) Its difficult to find a variety of food in the market
- c) Its cheaper to grow than to buy food
- d) Its feels good to produce your own food
- e) Other Specify _____

5.4 If you grow own food, what types of crops do you grow?

- a) Maize only
- b) Maize and sorghum
- c) Maize and millet
- d) Maize and sweet potato
- e) Other Specify _____

5.5 If you grow own food how do you produce your own food considering the constant drought in the area?

- a) The rains are enough
- b) We use irrigation
- c) We grow drought resistant crops
- d) We have a field in the wetland area
- e) Other Specify _____

5.6 The current food distribution might not continue forever, what do you intend to do when the agencies stop distributing food?

- a) I don't know
- b) We will be able to produce our own
- c) We will sell our belongs
- d) We will starve
- e) Other Specify _____

APPENDIX 2 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE 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.

3.1.4 Guiding Questions for Focus Group Discussions

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?

Section 2: Food Aid Distribution in the Area

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

Section 3: Food Security in the Area

6. Do you think people have enough food in this area?
7. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?
8. What do you think are the causes of food insecurity in the area?
9. Do you think the Government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food in this area?
10. What else do you think the Government need to do?
11. What other ways would people do to improve food security in the area?

Section 4: The Impact of Food Aid on Food Security

12. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
13. Would you encourage food distribution? Why?
14. What would you say is the impact of food aid on food availability, accessibility and utilization in the area?

APPENDIX 3 PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

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 explanation if there is 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 Government Officials

Section 1: Sources of Food in the Area

15. What are the main ways people get food in this area?
16. Do you think people have enough food in this area?
17. What do you think are the causes of food shortages, if any, in this area?

Section 2: Food Aid Distribution in the Area

18. Does the Government distribute food in this area?
19. How much and where does the food come from?
20. How is the food distribution going?
21. Is the food distributed in this area enough?
22. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
23. Would you encourage food aid distribution?
24. In your opinion, do you think food aid is necessary in this area?
Why?

Section 3: Food Security in the Area

25. In your opinion do you think there is food insecurity in this area?
26. What do you think are the causes of food insecurity in the area?
27. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?
28. Do you think the Government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortages in this area?
29. What else do you think the Government need to do?

Section 4: The Impact of Food Aid on Food Security

30. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
31. Would you encourage food distribution? Why?
32. In your opinion, what is the impact of food aid in this area?

Guiding Questions for Church Officials

Section 1: Sources of Food in the Area

33. What are the main sources of food in this area?
34. Do you think people have enough food in this area?
35. What do you think is the cause of food insecurity in this area?

Section 2: Food Aid Distribution in the Area

36. As a church, do you distribute food in this area?
37. How much and where do you get it from?
38. How is the food distribution going?
39. Is the food you distributed enough?

40. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?

41. Would you encourage food distribution? Why?

42. In your opinion, do you think food aid is necessary in this area?
Why?

Section 3: Food Security in the Area

43. Do you think there is food insecurity in this area?

44. What do you think are the causes of food insecurity in the area?

45. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?

46. Do you think the Government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in this area?

47. What else do you think the Government need to do?

Section 4: The Impact of Food Aid on Food Security

48. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?

49. Would you encourage food aid distribution? Why?

50. In your opinion, what is the impact of food aid in this area?

Guiding Questions for WVI (NGO) Officials

Section 1: Sources of Food in the Area

51. What are the main ways people get food in this area?

52. Do you think people have enough food in this area?

53. What do you think are the causes of food shortage in this area?

Section 2: Food Aid Distribution in the Area

54. As an NGO do you distribute food in this area?
55. How much and where do you get it from?
56. How is the food distribution going?
57. Is the food distributed in this area enough?
58. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
59. Would you encourage food distribution? Why?
60. In your opinion, do you think food aid is necessary in this area?
Why?

Section 3: Food Security in the Area

61. In your opinion, do you think there is food insecurity in this area?
62. What do you think are the causes of food insecurity in the area?
63. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?
64. Do you think the Government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food in this area?
65. What else do you think the Government need to do?

Section 4: The Impact of Food Aid on Food Security

66. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
67. Would you encourage food aid distribution? Why?
68. In your opinion, what is the impact of food aid in this area?

Guiding Questions for Businessmen and businesswomen

Section 1: Sources of Food in the Area

69. What do you think are the main ways people get food in this area?
70. Do you think people have enough food in this area?
71. What do you think are the causes of food shortage in this area?
72. What type of food can be found in the markets? Where does it come from?

Section 2: Food Aid Distribution in the Area

73. Do Business people distribute food in this area?
74. How much and where does it come from?
75. How is the food distribution going?
76. Is the food distributed in this area enough?
77. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?
78. Would you encourage food distribution? Why?
79. In your opinion, do you think food aid is necessary in this area? Why?

Section 3: Food Security in the Area

80. In your opinion do you think there is food insecurity in this area?
81. What do you think are the causes of food insecurity in the area?
82. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?
83. Do you think the Government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in this area?
84. What else do you think the Government need to do?

Section 4: The Impact of Food Aid on Food Security

85. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?

86. Would you encourage food aid distribution? Why?

87. What would you say is the impact of food aid on the markets?

a) How were the prices of food and other commodities in the markets before food distribution started?

b) How are the prices of food and other commodities now after food distribution?

88. In your opinion, what is the impact of food aid in this area?

APPENDIX 4 OBSERVATION

Guiding Question for Observation

1. In your opinion what is the general health of the people in this community?
2. Do you notice any maize granaries in the community?
3. How dry or wet does the land look?
4. Do you notice any fields in and around the community?
5. Any crops in the fields? How do the crops look?
6. What type of domestic animals do you see in the community?

Appendix 5 (A)

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

QUESTION	NGO	COMMUNITY LEADERS	FARMERS ASSOCIATION	SUMMARY
Sources of Food				
1. What are the main ways people get food in the area	- Farming - Buying - Food aid	- Farming - Buying	- Farming - Buying - Casual labor in exchange for food	- Farming - Buying - Food aid - Casual labor in exchange for food
2. Do people have enough food in the area?	- No	- No	- No	- No
Food aid distribution				
3. Do you distribute food in this area?	- Yes	- No	- No	- Only NGOs
4. How much and where do you get it from?	- From WFP, led by the government			- From WFP
5. How is the food distribution going?	- Well, according to programs for example only to patients or children	- Not every time you need it	- Not fairly distributed, sometimes chiefs are greedy - Food for work (planting trees)	- According to the NGO distributing the food, the distribution is going on well but the community feels like there is unfair distribution,
6. Is the food distributed enough	- No	- Not enough for bid households - 50kg per household	- No	- The food distributed but eh NGO is not enough
7. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?	- They are happy - Like free food	- People are not always happy with free food, they want their own	- People are not happy to just receive free food, they are happy only when they cant do otherwise	- People appreciate the food aid in times of crisis but would have loved to produce their own

8. In your opinion, is food aid distribution necessary? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes; - Only in time crisis - on small scare not long term - has created job 4 the distributors. - No; - makes people lazy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only in time of crisis - Only when people have nothing to eat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, especially this year because people needed it - No, its creates enmity when its unfairly distributed - Those who didn't receive don't want to participate in any development programs in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food aid distribution is necessary only in times of disaster otherwise it has made people become lazy and dependent - Food aid should be for short term only - Food aid has created jobs for the distributors employed by the NGO - Food aid creates division among the people
Food security				
9. In your opinion do you think there is food insecurity in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - People buy food from Mozambique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No - Only when there is disaster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only because of the bad weather conditions otherwise with good rains the area could be food secure as our soils are good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is food insecurity in Ngabu area
10. What do you think are the causes of food shortage and food insecurity in the area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bad weather conditions; - Dry spells and floods - Pests - Bad choices of crops for the area eg. Maize instead of millet and sorghum - Belief that their soils ate good, therefore no need for fertilizer, prefer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too much rains - Floods - Dry spells - Drought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too much rains - Floods - Old fashioned seeds, cant afford the new ones - Salty soils in the wetlands - Slow in adapting change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bad weather; too much rains, floods, dry spells and drought - Old farming practices - People's slowness to change - Bad choices of the type of crops to grow

11. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would suffer a lot - People would die of hunger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would die of hunger - People could run away to Mozambique - The sick would suffer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would suffer a lot - Many would still survive since food aid is not given to everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would be affected especially the sick and orphans
12. Do you think the government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in the area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, it is tried its best - It sends farm advisers to help the people in the area - It teaches us new farming methods but we believe our soils are good and the introduction of fertilizer will spoil it and next time we can't afford to maintain fertilizer application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government is not doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in Ngabu area
13. What else do you think the government need to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empower people to produce their own food - Encourage other approaches like animal husbandry - Encourage modern farming methods eg water harvesting and irrigation - Move people to better places eg from floods prone places to high land - Improve roads for easy transportation of farm produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help the poor with say, animals - Force people to use manure - Encourage irrigation and help people with pumps and dams - Sort out selling prices for cotton like it has done with tobacco. - It should help the poor and the orphans more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set good selling prices for cotton - Find more companies to buy more cotton - It should help everyone not just a few - It should be serious about helping the farmers - Help farmers with loans fertilizer, pesticides and equipment for pressing cotton seeds into oil - Encourage and help with irrigation - Give people food then seeds when close to growing season - Help farmers manage the water for irrigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government needs to do more to help and empower people to produce enough food from their fields through modern farming practices.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain skilled people - Provide enough human resource 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage high price seeds - Encourage association and equip them 	
The impact of food aid on food security				
14. In your opinion what is the impact of food aid in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive. It has saved lives. Has helped rehabilitate people's assets. - Negative. It has made people lazy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It has been helpful especially to the sick and the old - It has provided good health to people - Gives people energy - Has encouraged development eg tree planting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It provided energy for people to work in their fields - It discouraged stealing food from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food aid has had a positive impact in the area as it has saved lives and provided energy for people to work in their fields. - It has had a negative impact as it has contributed to people becoming lazy and dependent. It has also encouraged development such as tree planting
15. In your opinion do you think food aid discourages or encourages food production?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discourages food production. Creates dependency - Encourages. People have energy to work in their fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages food production because people have energy to work in their fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages food production, people have energy to work in their fields - People are pushed to a better level of poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food aid discourages food production when people become lazy and wait for free food - It has encouraged food production when its made people energetic enough to work in their fields
Additional comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People need to be encouraged and helped to produce their own food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The fertilizer from Illovo sugar factory runs into our fields and destroys our soils - People are not lazy - People still work hard in their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cotton can be profitable and could help many to get out of poverty but cotton prices are low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People need to be encouraged and helped to produce their own food - Food aid should be short

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People need to change their approach to farming - Food shortage problem has been in existence since 1992 	fields	-	term
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APPENDIX 5 (B) PERSONAL INTERVIEWS: GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

QUESTION	Land Resources Conservation Officer	Agriculture Communication Officer	District Manager: ADMARC	Metrological Assistant	Animal Health Dev Officer	- Summary
Sources of Food						
1. What are the main ways people get food in the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming - Purchasing - Food Aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming (Dec-March upland, Aug-Sept lower land) - Buying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming - Food aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming - Buying - Food aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming - Buying - Food aid - Relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming - Buying - Food aid - Relatives
2. Do people have enough food in the area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally no 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't think so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No
Food aid distribution						
3. Does the government distribute food in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No - It only directs NGOs to needy areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through ADMARC for sale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only helps to allocate organizations to the needy areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through NGOs

4. How much and where do you get it from?	-	-	- Buys from farmers, keeps it and sales them at a later stage at controlled prices	-	-	- The Government buys from the farmers the food it sells back to them
5. How is the food distribution going?	-	-	-	-	-	- Well
6. Is the food distributed enough	- Not enough	-	- Not enough	- Not enough - Food is targeted only to old people the sick and orphans - Is limited to one bag even for big families	- Not enough	- Not enough
7. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?	- They like free food -	- People are happy with food aid - They enjoy to have disasters to be victims and receive free food - A few don't like free food they are ashamed of it	- People enjoy receiving free food than producing it themselves	- People enjoy free food - Some would to anything to become victims, eg they would not evacuate even if the floods were coming	- They look forward to it - They are not ashamed of free food	- People are happy with the free food - Some even put themselves in situations prone to disasters so as to get free food - A few are ashamed of free food

8. In your opinion, is food aid distribution necessary? Why? Would you encourage it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes: - but only in times of crisis - No: - Makes people lazy - Some sell the food they receive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes - Unless in crisis - NO: - People become lazy - The NGOs continue food aid to secure their jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, when there is drought - Only when necessary - No, makes people lazy - People get used to receiving free food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, only to the very needy like the elderly, orphans and the sick - No, people become lazy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only for a short term - Every year cant be a disaster to command food aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, only in times of need - No, people become lazy and dependent. - NGOS continue food distribution to secure their jobs
Food security						
9. In your opinion do you think there is food insecurity in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, only this year - Not really if people worked hard and followed good farming methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At times - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only because people don't work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, if people worked Hard - No,
10. What do you think are the causes of food shortage and food insecurity in the area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate rains - No use of fertilizer - Floods - Pests - Belief that their soils are good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People's laziness - People's reluctance to learn new farming methods - Belief that their soils do not need fertilizer - Drought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People's attitudes - Stealing from the fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of rains - Lack of education on good farming methods - The belief that their soils are good and do not need fertilizers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes lack of enough rains - People's reluctance to change - People are not hard working - People are slow to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Floods - Pests - Lack of rains - People's laziness - People's reluctance To change
11. If food distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would suffer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People will suffer but they would be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would suffer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would still survive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People would Suffer

was to stop, what do you think would happen?		forced to do something for themselves	- They need to be given a warning first		- They would find other ways to survive	- Some would still Survive
12. Do you think the government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in the area?	- Not much	- Yes, the government is trying eg the fertilizer subsidy though they didn't use it they sold it	- Yes, the government gives free fertilizer and distributes maize seeds	- Yes, they send extension workers to help farmers - Introduction of fertilizer subsidy	- Yes, the government is trying but it is not very clear on what to do to help the people	- Yes, with the help Of NGOs
13. What else do you think the government needs to do?	- Increase staff to assist farmers - Intensify irrigation - Increase funding in agric projects	- Provide a lot of agricultural demonstrations for farmers to learn - Provide more resources	- Provide smaller bags of maize for sale for those who cant afford the big 50kg ones	- Increase staff eg extension workers - Intensify teaching people - Introduce irrigation farming	- Encourage small schemes - Encourage irrigation and livestock production	- Encourage irrigation In dry places - Intensify irrigation - Increase funding For agric programs - Provide enough Funding - Encourage livestock Production
The impact of food aid on food security						
14. In your	- The food	- Negative:	- Positive:	- Negative	- Negative	- Positive: has

opinion what is the impact of food aid in this area?	market suffer - Casual labor is not available	- Demoralize government efforts to change people's mindsets - Eg a chief told people not to obey the teaching to use manure in their fields incase they don't receive more food aid	- Has helped many need people			helped In time of need - Negative: demoralizes Government efforts To teach people New methods of agric
15. In your opinion do you think food aid discourages or encourages food production?	- Discourages food production	- Discourages food production	- Discourages food production -	- Discourages food production. - People waste time begging for food - Some people can even sell the food given	- Discourages food production	- Discourages food production
Additional comments	- People rely so much on cotton as a cash crop in this area - People also can rely on livestock	- If people could be given the food but be warned that they wont receive again next time, they would work hard in their fields - NGOs need to use other approaches to food distribution like work for assets - MP refused agric	- Only to the working people buy a lot of maize not farmers	- People need to be sensitized about food aid - If people could be encouraged to produce animals since Ngabu area is good for this. - People are stubborn	- Govt need to introduce strong policies for food aid distribution such as tree planting for food - Help people with what they need not eg fertilizer when they just sell it. - People don't normally give	- If livestock production Was encouraged Could feed the whole Blantyre. - NGOs need to find Other approaches To food aid distribution - People in

		shows in his area lest the people loose the chances of being given food aid.			the right information incase it jeopardizes their change of receiving food aid	Ngabu Are stubborn People don't normally Give the right information In case it jeopardizes Their chances of Getting free food - People can grow Winter crops
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APPENDIX 5 (C) PERSONAL INTERVIEWS: CHURCH OFFICIALS

QUESTION	Seventh Day Adventist	CCAP (Presbyterian)	Catholic Church	SUMMARY
Sources of Food				
1. What are the main ways people get food in the area	- Farming -	- Farming - Buying	- Farming - Buying - Businesses	- Farming - Buying
2. Do people have enough food in the area?	- Not enough	- No	- Not enough	- Not enough
Food aid distribution				

3. Do you distribute food in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - Only in small amounts, to widows and orphans in the church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, to our church members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Churches do distribute food to their church members
4. How much and where do you get it from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From members' contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From our headquarters (the Synod) - Maize flour – 12 tons - Salt – 2 kg per household - Maize – 20 kg per household - Beans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through our NGO CADECOM to few needy ones in crucial times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each church gets food from their won different sources eg contribution from their members and headquarters.
5. How is the food distribution going?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A bit tough, especially during Christmas - Through chiefs who help identify beneficiaries and the church verifies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through food for work programs - We chose beneficiaries through Christian committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well
6. Is the food distributed enough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough, some don't receive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough
7. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are happy with food aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are happy to receive free food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some people are happy with food aid - Other people are ashamed to receive free food and they want to work for it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many people are happy to receive free food - A few are ashamed they would like to work for it
8. In your opinion, is food aid distribution necessary? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, but only when very necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, it creates enmity when unfairly distributed - Contributes to laziness - People have become dependent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, unless there is unmanaged disaster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only in crisis - It creates enmity because of the unfair distribution - It makes people lazy and dependent
Food security				

9. In your opinion do you think there is food insecurity in this area?	- Ngabu is generally food insecure	- Yes - People get food from Mozambique	- Yes	- Yes, Ngabu is food insecure
10. What do you think are the causes of food shortage and food insecurity in the area?	- People's laziness - Drought - People's mentality, cant accept change	- The unpredictable weather - The weather make people are lazy - Dry spells - Un reliable rains	- Unorganized farming - Poor farming methods - Wrong choices of seeds to plant - Not enough fields - Bad eating practices	- Drought - Unpredictable weather - Dry spells - Un reliable rains - Poor farming practices and wrong choices of crops - Not enough fields - People's laziness and reluctance to change
11. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?	- People would suffer - Food distribution should not stop abruptly	- There would be calamity -	- People would suffer	- People would suffer
12. Do you think the government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in the area?	- Not much - There is lack of commitment	- Not this government	- No	- The government is not doing enough to help people out of food shortage problem in the area
13. What else do you think the government need to do?	- Teach people new methods of agriculture - Introduce other crops like cassava	- Be more committed to helping people - Come up with ways of preventing animals from eating in people's fields - Encourage animal production	- Teach people how to care for animals and protect them form thieves and help them sell at profit - Teach people to grow the right crops that do well in this area ie	- The government need t be more committed to helping people in Ngabu - Teach people modern methods of agriculture - Encourage people to grow the right type of crops for this area like millet, sorghum and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage irrigation and help farmers with equipment - Train more skilled agriculturalists - Provide more funds. 	<p>cotton, millet and sorghum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help people find markets for their produce - Encourage irrigation farming - Provide more agriculture staff 	<p>cotton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage people in livestock production and help them find markets - Provide more skilled workers and fund the agriculture programs
The impact of food aid on food security				
14. In your opinion what is the impact of food aid in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People have food especially in time of crisis - It has not disturbed the markets - It has created dependency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It contributes to people's laziness - Would encourage it only if there are no other options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It has saved lives in times of crisis - It has made the government relax leaving the NGOs to do it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People found help in times of crisis - Food aid would be encouraged only in time of disaster - Food aid has made people lazy and dependent - It has made the government
15. In your opinion do you think food aid discourages or encourages food production?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It discourages food production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It discourages food production - People don't want to work in their fields because they anticipate floods or dry spells 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food aid discourages food production
Additional comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is need for people to change their mentality - Even the village headmen discourage people from using fertilizer in their fields. - People sold starter packs (seeds from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is need to give more help to farmers through NGOs - Irrigation is a key to improve food security in Ngabu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People don't value animals in this area - People just sell their harvests without thinking about tomorrow - If good farming was pursued, people could grow even four times in a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People in Ngabu need to change their mentality towards food aid and agricultural practices - If well managed, Ngabu would produce enough food for the people

	government) instead of using in their fields			
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APPENDIX 5 (D)

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS: BUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN

QUESTION	Businessman: Shop Owner	Businessman: Animal farm owner	Businessman: Selling fish in a market	Businesswoman: Selling Maize in a market	Businesswoman: Selling beans in a market	Summary
Sources of Food						
1. What are the main ways people get food in the area	- Farming - Buying - Some exchange empty bags with maize in Mozambique	- Farming - Buying	- Farming - Buying - Food aid	- Farming - Food aid - Buying	- Farming	- Farming - Food aid - Buying
2. Do people have enough food in the area?	- Not anymore	- Not enough	- No	- Not enough	- Not enough	- Not enough
Food aid distribution						
3. What type of food is found in the markets? Where does it come from?	- Rice - Maize - Millet - Sorghum	- Maize - Sorghum - Millet	- Fish - Maize - Cassava - Bananas - Millet	- Maize - Millet	- Beans - Potatoes - Maize - Cassava	- Maize - Millet - Sorghum - Rice - Cassava - Beans - Fish - Potatoes - Bananas

4. Do business people distribute food in this area?	- Some few big business men	- Not really, just to the beggars - Only when it's a matter of life and death	- No	-	-	- Some few big Business men
5. How much and where do you get it from?	-	- The maize intended to feed animals	-	-	-	-
6. Is the food distributed enough	-	- Not bad	-	-	-	-
7. What do you think is the attitude of people towards food aid?	- Some are happy with the free food	- People welcome food aid - They always feel they need to be helped	- People are not very happy with food aid	- People are happy	- People are happy with food aid	- People are generally Happy with food aid
8. In your opinion, is food aid distribution necessary? Why?	- Yes, for people to have food	- No	- Yes, in times of crisis	- Yes	- Yes	- People would want Food aid to Continue
Food security						-
9. In your opinion do you think there is food insecurity in this area?	- Yes	- Yes, but could change if people changed	- No	- Yes	- Yes	- Ngabu is a food Insecure place
10. What do you think are the causes of	- Drought - floods	- Food aid - People's laziness	- The soils are easily water logged and	- Lack of rain - Drought - Floods	- Drought - Floods	- Drought - Floods - Lack of rains

food shortage and food insecurity in the area?		-	then gets dry quickly - Lack of rain			- People's laziness
11. If food distribution was to stop, what do you think would happen?	- People would suffer because people don't have money to buy food	-	- People would suffer - Sometimes only business people are the only ones with food	- People would suffer - Some can die	- Many people would suffer	-
12. Do you think the government is doing enough to alleviate the problem of food shortage in the area?	- Yes	- Yes, but not enough	- Yes, it is trying but not much	- Not enough	- Yes, it helps people with food	-
13. What else do you think the Government needs to do?	- Encourage more NGOs to distribute food	- Stop food aid distribution - Help farmers by setting good prices for farm produce like cotton - Teach people to keep their own food	- Help people with irrigation strong pumps - Let the food distribution be fair	- Tell the food distributors to stop unfair distribution give food to all not only to the chosen few - Give, people employment - Help people to do business	- Help bring water for the Shire river to our fields - Help people with irrigation equipment	- Help with irrigation - Make the food distributors be fair - Help farmers by setting good prices for their farm produce - Teach people to keep their

						own food
The impact of food aid on food security						
14. Would you encourage food aid? Why?	- Yes	- No, may be free farm inputs - Only in big crisis	- Yes	- Yes	- Yes	- Many people would encourage food aid distribution
15. What would you say is the impact of food aid in the area?	- When there is no food aid distribution the prices of food go up - When people have food, food prices go down - We make a lot more sales when people haven't received food aid	- Negative: - Food aid has made people to become beggars - It has made people lazy and dependent; they just wait for disaster and then receive food aid - People have become used to food aid - Markets get disturbed, they sell at a loss.	- When people have received food aid the sales of other commodities are good - Even with food aid prices remain the same in the markets - People have energy to work in their fields.	- When there is no food available to people, prices go up in the markets - Food aid helps children go to school because they have eaten - Food aid helps the sick the old and orphans	- Food aid does not disturb our markets - The prices remain the same - Food aid helps children go to school not to work as casual labors - Helps people go to work in their field	- Gives people energy to work in their fields - Keeps children in school instead of going to do casual work - There is not much difference in prices in the markets because of food aid - Food aid helps the sick, the old and the orphans - Food aid makes people lazy and dependent

<p>16. In your opinion do you think food aid encourages or discourages food production? Please explain.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - people still grow food even if they are given free food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It discourages food production - Some people say 'in the year of hunger, people grow a lot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It encourages food production especially when the rains are good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It encouraged food production - The weather is what hinders food production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It encourages food production because people go to work in their fields instead of working as casual laborers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food aid encourages food production because people have the energy to work in their fields - Makes people concentrate in their fields other than going for casual work to make money to buy food
<p>Additional comments</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People always wait for the government or someone to help them - People should change their mindset towards food aid - Why should Ngabu have chronic disasters? 				

APPENDIX 6

OBSERVATION

GUIDING QUESTION	OBSERVATION FROM RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTS
- Did you notice any fields in and around the community?	- Fields could be seen in the community but many of them were quite small
- How dry or wet does the land look?	- In most of the places the land was quite dry
- How do the crops in the fields look?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In some fields some crops looked stunted and wilted. Some were just left in the fields as it was a waste of time to harvest them. - Some crops still looked green such as cotton and millet as it was not yet time for harvest - Some fields were seen washed away
- Did you notice any granaries in this community?	- Very few granaries in the community as many people did not harvest enough to need one
- What type of domestic animals do you notice in the communities?	- Animals observed in the community included cattle, goats, chickens, guinea fowls.
- How healthy do the animals look?	- The animals look okay
- What is the general health of the people in the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the people were quite healthy - A few sickly people were seen
- How do the homes look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most houses were grass thatched - Few are iron thatched - Poor sanitation systems could be observed