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MODEL VILLAGE APPROACH CONCEPT

1.0 BACKGROUND

Rural Development is influenced by a number of social economic factors that include a well-organized extension and training delivery system that responds to the many challenges and demands from Malawian villages.

For the past three decades, organizations within Malawian’s public, private sector and civil society have used various extension systems and approaches to reinforce development and improve peoples livelihoods in the village. Centralized and individualistic approaches to rural development resulted in non cost effective use of resources including financial, human and material. In some cases there were duplication of programmes without sharing experiences with transparency and accountability to each other. This has resulted in confusions, inefficient use of valuable resources and unsatisfactory improvement in peoples livelihoods. As a result livelihood – based problems have perpetuated in the villages. These are:

(i) Human Resource-Based Problems

- Persistent food and human nutrition insecurity
- Low education and literacy events
- Inequities in access and control of development resources (such as land, inputs and information) and benefits by various gender categories
- High prevalence of HIV and AIDS
- Drudgery from triple roles: production, reproduction and community with inadequate Labour – saving technologies
- Inadequate capacity for village development committees.

(ii) Social Assets Problems:

- Inadequate psycho social support for the vulnerable groups
- Poor village mobilization and organization for transformation
- Uncoordinated delivery of services using top down approach
- Slow adoption of technologies

(iii) Natural Resources And Environmental Problems:

- Poor land use and degradation
- Environmental Degradation
- Poor sanitation
- In availability of clean safe water.
v) Financial Resource Problems:

- Lack of financial Resources
- Poor access to credit
- Slow progression into community based organizations for entrepreneurship and investment.

(iv) Physical And Rural Infrastructure Problems

- Inadequate capacity to develop rural infrastructure
- No easy access to health centers, schools, maize mills and markets.

The challenges failed in Agricultural Extension services delivery which includes democratization, that is where people are able to demand services, and decentralization, where power is develop to lower levels, has necessitated the development of new approaches to rural livelihoods enhancement that are demand driven, plurastic and use participatory rural development approaches in addressing the various challenges in the rural areas.

The entry point for these approaches is the village that is a social grouping of households, with well – defined leadership and norms governing the inhabitants. The outcome of such approaches and the multisectoral wide integrated packaging of interventions is a totally transformed village called model village.

2.0 THE MODEL VILLAGE

2.1 What is a Model Village?

It is a village with improved livelihoods of people through integrated interventions.

Improving livelihood means making a positive change in the household status socially, economically, psychologically and physically. The village is committed to working together with various organizations and institutions, has well defined development structures and is receptive to harmonized integrated development interventions for improving the rural livelihoods. The rural livelihoods assets for village development include:

- Physical resources – Which includes man made assets like schools, roads markets and hospitals/health centers
Financial Resources – These are monetary and investments assets like land and livestock

Social resources – These are grouping of people in their related functional organizations within formal and informal settings. Examples of formal settings include various sector work places such as the district assembly and project offices. Informal settings include household, clan and village development committees.

2.2 Why A Model Village?

The objective of developing a model village is to improve the quality of life of the rural masses of all gender categories socially, economically, physically, culturally and psychologically.

2.3 What Is The Model village Approach?

It is an approach which uses participatory extension methods to develop integrated and multisectoral interventions with partnerships. The approach also ensures inclusion and participation of various gender categories in the identification, planning and implementation of various development programmes and projects.

2.4 Why A Model Village Approach (MVA)

A Model Village Approach is there for concerted and holistic packaging, delivery and implementation of demand driven interventions. The model village approach has potential to enable collaborative services providers to respond to the multiple challenges in integrated ways through enhanced partnerships.

MVA aims at empowering communities to take control of their destiny. The outcome of using the approach is total transformation of the villages socially, economically and culturally. It helps to ensure that service providers responds to demands and need of rural communities in an integrated, complementary and phased manner for sustainable impact.

2.5 Overall Objectives of The Model Village

It is to transform rural villages by empowering them to respond to their needs by maximizing their ability and assets to improve their livelihoods. These needs relate to food and nutrition, health, social and physical infrastructure, access and control of resources and benefits by the various gender categories.
2.6 **Specific Objectives of The Model Village**

The specific objectives of a model village are to:

- Empower communities/villages to be responsible for their development destiny
- Improve the social economic status of the households by gender categories
- Improve accessibility to quality social economic and physical infrastructure and assets
- Improve people’s capacity in production and marketing-related activities
- Improve natural resources management for sustainable development

2.7 **Features of A Model Village**

The features originates from existing decentralization policy environment that dwells on pluralistic and demand driven services within the context of Malawi Growth Development Strategy.

The village achieves and supports the following features under the triple gender roles (production, reproduction and community).

a. **The Human Resource And Development Features**

- Healthy And Well Nourished People

  These should:
  - Use safe and clean water
  - Practice dietary diversification
  - Ensures micronutrient intake
  - Access and use home based care kits for the sick
  - Be able to plan and provide psychosocial care and support to household members
  - Should live in conducive and sanitary household environment should access VCT and reproductive health services

- Empowered People Including The Vulnerable Gender Categories:

  They should:
  - Make informed decisions concerning issues that affect their lives
  - Have access to and control of resources and benefits from services.
  - Able to demand services
- Be able to explain to anyone what they are doing and why the benefits, problems and solutions.
- Interact with several stakeholders and service providers on various interventions.
- Have village Action Plan and vision statement.
- Have rules and regulations to govern them.
- Be able to do participatory based monitoring and evaluation.
- Be able to do of multisectoral planning, implementation and supervision.

- **Protected And Socialized Household Members:**
  - Should prevent HIV infections
  - Should be able to deal with long term illnesses
  - Should be able to deal with loss of bread winner
  - Household members know their rights
  - Should have positive attitude towards affected and infected
  - Should be able to accept and provide counseling

- **Literate Household Members/Community**
  - Access to schools
  - Access to literacy classes

- **Recreation Centers**
  - Access to play grounds
  - Access to information centers

b. **Community Based Social Structures And Organizations**

They should have:

- **Functional Community Based Organizations such as:**
  - Farmer groups and clubs
  - Associations and cooperatives
  - Empowered Village Development Committees and subcommittees.
  - Special interest groups

- Organizations bank accounts and saving schemes.
c. **Crop Diversification And Intensification**

They should have:

- **Diversified Crop Production**
  - Access to various exotic and indigenous varieties of crops
  - Crop seed banks
  - Green belts with recommended technologies/cultural practices
  - Crop seed “pass on” programme
  - Village food banks
  - Winter production of crops
  - Establishment of orchards
  - Dimba gardens (winter and backyard) with indigenous and exotic vegetables
  - Labour and time saving technologies
  - Integrated crop pest management

- **Irrigation Technologies In Use**
  
  They should use:

  - Dams for irrigation
  - Drip irrigation
  - Treadle pumps,
  - Motorized pumps,
  - Gravity irrigation
  - Residual moisture
  - Sprinkler irrigation
  - Watering cans

- **Soil and Water Conservation structures or Technologies**

  - Raised food paths and field boundaries
  - Mulched fields
  - Check dams
  - Cover Crops
  - Realigned ridges with box ridges
  - Vetiver planting
  - Water harvesting structures including swalleys
  - Land reclamation
● Soil Fertility Improvement Technologies
  - Conservation farming
  - Manure making and use
  - Agro forestry nurseries and fields
  - Agro forestry seed banks
  - Use of farm yard manure
  - Use of leguminous crops
  - Crop residue incorporation

d. Livestock Diversification And Intensification

● Diversified small stock production
  - Access to small stock – chickens, rabbits, guinea fowls goats

● Availability of Breeder Stock
  - Livestock “pass-on” and exchange programme
  - Through cross breeding

● Improved Pasture
  - Establishment of pasture grasses and legumes
  - Fodder crops and silage

● Improved Animal Health:
  - A revolving fund for the drug box (drugs and vaccines)

● Improved Animal Housing
  - Improved kholas

● Oxenisation and other animal power technologies
  - Ox drawn equipment
  - Oxen

e. Diversified Processing and Utilization of Foods

● Preserved Foods of Different types
  - Diversified preparation, utilization and storage of various foods.
- Use of exotic and indigenous foods.
- Use of improved recipes for preparation of indigenous and exotic foods

f. **Diversified Household Income And Village Wealth-creating Features**

- Household income generating activities
  - Village assets such as markets, maize mills and trading centers
- Micro-finance facilities: Rural Banks Saving Schemes.

g. **Improve Health And Sanitary Facilities**

- Well ventilated houses, kitchens and pit-latrines
- Use of rubbish pits, sun tables with soak pits, clothes drying line, bath shelter with soak pits and well spaced facilities
- Attractive and sanitary household environment
- Borehole/taps/protected well with pipe water disposal (clean and safe drinking water).

h. **Well Established Physical infrastructure**

- Accessibility to social facilities e.g. Schools health units, bridges, maize mill.

i. **Natural Resources Development Features**

- Fisheries
  - Fish ponds
  - Integrated fish farming and agriculture
- Forestry And Wild Life Conservation
  - Wood lot established (individual and communal).
  - Trees planted in homesteads and the entire village
  - Conserved natural forestry reserves
3.0 TRANSFORMING A VILLAGE TO A MODEL VILLAGE

3.1 Approach

The model village approach concept uses participatory approaches to totally transform a village using participatory extension methods to integrate multisectoral interventions and partnership. The approach also ensures inclusion and participation of various gender categories in the identification, planning and implementation of various village development programmes or projects.

3.2 Strategic Principles For Model Village Approach

- **Demand Driven Interventions:**

Villages demand interventions that would improve their livelihood through extension participatory approaches such as PRA and PEM for identification and prioritization of interventions. The interventions are met with pluralistic responses that require collaborative efforts from the various sectors such as education, health, natural resources and fisheries, local government public works and others.

- **Integrated Interventions Packaging**

It is important to package integrated interventions in a way that they complement each other in order to improve the livelihood of the people. The interventions should be accompanied by relevant user-friendly technical information that should be communicated through various media.

- **Community Empowerment For Sustainable Livelihoods:**

Villages should be empowered through strengthened local leadership or village committees to take charge of the integrated interventions and make appropriate decisions. Community empowerment should include:

(i) Promotion of quality participation of all gender categories by sex: women and men differentiated by age: the elderly, adults, youth, type of household heads including the HIV/AIDS infected and affected: widows, widowers and orphans. Quality participation of these gender categories requires efficient and equitable access to and control of agriculture production and
livelihood technologies, information, services and related benefits.

(ii) Promotion of community- Based support for vulnerable groups: e.g. establishment of community food and seed banks and community based care and support for the sick. These benefit from strong community support organizations and net works.

(iii) Income and employment generation: for the various gender categories

- The multi-setoral partnerships and liaison: facilitated through VDC, ADCs, DECS under the current decentralization arrangements in Malawi to ensure holistic support for the integrated interventions. The sector wide response efforts require strong coordination to allow the CBOS,FBOs, NGOs and Private Institutions such as seed and fertilizer companies to avail services to the model village.

3.3 Process for Transforming a Village into Model Village

- **Strategic Extension Campaign/Sensitization of stakeholders And Partners.**

  It is used to create awareness of the model village approach. This is done through public meetings organized by local leaders and facilitated by Extension workers from various sectors and subject matter specialist, exchange visits, multi media mobile vans and village technology promoters. The extension workers together will local leaders and village technology promoters should assess the peoples response.

- **Identification of the village to be transformed**

  Start with the village where there is positive response but it is in relative poverty. The local leaders and extension workers in an area should arrive at a consensus as to which village to start with.

- **Secondary Data Collection**

  - The data collected from local leaders and development partners working in the area.
• **Conduct Base line Survey for Baseline Data Collection**

Extension Workers should facilitate generation of baseline information for a village guided by Monitoring and Evaluation Officers. Information collected will be a basis for measuring progress.

• **Conduct Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) for Needs Assessment**

This is used for identification and prioritization of interventions to address needs, problems of all gender categories with clear and realistic targets, performance indicators by gender and time frame of implementation. The interventions are packaged in an integrated manner. The following are crucial for this process:

- Participatory Action Planning: with emphasis on prioritized activities with clear and realistic targets, performance indicators by gender and period of achievement. The action plan should be supported at all phases with various services including advisory, training materials and support visits

- Participatory packaging of Integrated Interventions: Gender-specific appropriate technologies accompanied with related information Education and change communication strategies for desired behavior

This is done in collaboration with the various sectors, stakeholders and partners. Communities should participate in the monitoring and evaluation. Therefore community based monitoring tools should be put in place.

• **Linking of the model village to resources and services through strong partnership within the village, the section, EPA and district.**

The action plan and interventions should be supported by all sectors, stakeholders and partners involved. The linking should be done together with the village committees as a process of empowering them

• **Implementation of packaged integrated interventions**

The action plan should reflect the integrated interventions to be implemented which are packaged in collaboration with various subject matter specialists, stakeholders and partners. The interventions should be implemented according to schedule. The Village Development Committee,
subcommittees and Extension workers should facilitate the implementation of the interventions.

- **Institutional Building**
  The existing and emerging local institutions should be assisted to grow or be strengthened. They should know their roles and responsibilities and their relationships to other committees.

- **Capacity Building of the Villages to Improve their Knowledge, Skills and Change of their Attitudes**
  Knowledge and practice gaps or negative attitudes should be identified and appropriate measures taken to address the deficiencies through various extension methods e.g. courses, field days and campaigns. Capacity building should include utilization of the available and discovered village resources.

- **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**
  The stakeholders and partners should be involved in the measurement of progress and impact of interventions against set targets. The basis for monitoring and evaluation is the village action plan which should have monitoring indicators and evaluation tools.

### 3.4 Phases of the Model Village Transformation

#### 3.4.1 Phase I: Livelihood Security Phase

The outcome of this phase is to meet the basic needs of the people or households in terms of diversified adequate food, safe and clean drinking water, improved literacy and basic infrastructure. The following are the expected outcomes, processes to achieve the outcomes and tools to use in the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Diversified food and nutrition security. This is a result of:  
  - Improved crop production both in winter and summer  
  - Small stock production  
  - Fruit trees establishment  
  - Backyard garden | Village awareness campaigns through  
  - Village meetings  
  - Study tours  
  - Open days  
  0  
  PRA with focus on priorities by gender categories | Road to progress  
  Village mapping  
  Transect walk  
  Venn Diagram  
  Harvard Analytical Framework |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>establishment for indigenous and exotic varieties</th>
<th>Technical Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Prominent use of Labour and time saving technologies</td>
<td>• Demonstrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Field days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved sanitary conditions</td>
<td>Group dynamic Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Field tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Participatory monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training in project proposal preparation and lobbying skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Submission and defending of project proposals to Service providers and District Assemblies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserved fields and improved soil fertility. This is a result of the following.</td>
<td>Problem and objective tree Village Action planning Review meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint field visit reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training manuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colour coded Village development change meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ridge realignment with box ridges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Water harvesting structures establishment like swalleys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vetiver nursery establishment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vetiver hedgerows establishment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manure making and application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agro forestry nursery establishment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agro forestry fields</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agro forestry seed bank production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved food storage and diversified food utilization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Construction of staple food and vegetable storage structures and facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Preparation of meals based on food groups
- Utilization of improved food processing technologies or facilities e.g. solar drier or cooker

Established basic social economic amenities. This includes establishment of
- Literacy classes
- Temporary markets
- Preparatory works for schools, health centers and permanent markets.

### 3.4.2 Phase 2 : Empowerment Phase

Most of the interventions in this phase involve helping the community maximize returns from their enterprises beyond subsistence needs. As a result households are able to produce reasonable sellable surplus. The outcome of this phase is to empower the village to take actions over its problems in consideration of all gender categories and control its development destiny. The problems can be social, economic or physical. The activities of the second phase are implemented while continuing with the first phase activities. The expected outcomes and tools used in the process are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT</td>
<td>• Community mobilization campaigns</td>
<td>• Village meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Technical training</td>
<td>• Study tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community mobilization campaigns</td>
<td>• Relevant and user friendly training manuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prepare proposals for the infrastructure development</td>
<td>• Farmer study visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish and use Resource centers</td>
<td>• Lobbing/ negotiating skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Radio listening groups.</td>
<td>• Multimedia mobile van</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Village fairs/opendays</td>
<td>• Market study using</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pannel discussions</td>
<td>questionnaires and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Market surveys</td>
<td>• Production and market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organization and generation of micro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| markets, health centers, boreholes, piped water and trading centers  
- Information, education and communication empowerment through:  
  - Establishment of greenbelts  
  - Training farmers at mobile and Day Training Centers  
  - Contribution of Village activities to multimedia avenues e.g farmers field school  
  - Increased attendance and Demonstrations  

| ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT  
(Increased household enterprises, assets or incomes)  
This is achieved through:  
- Establishment of village financial and lending institutions  
- Establishment of business or Income Generating Projects  
- Establishment of cooperatives and Associations  

| financing arrangements  
- Establish Gross Margins.  

| information system  

3.4.3 Phase 3: Specialization Phase

The outcome of this phase is to establish and empower commodity specific FBOs with organized market for increased income and assets at household and village level. The activities in this phase are implemented while continuing with activities in the first and second phase. Below are the expected outcomes, processes and tools for this phase. However since the village is exposed to outside competition and pressure in marketing of its products it begins to consider economies of scale in its operations.
### Expected Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village Campaigns</td>
<td>Relevant Training manuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized training for the specialized groups.</td>
<td>Study visits to markets and agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct commodity specialization campaigns</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration of FBOs</td>
<td>Campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish networks with markets and agencies</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop contract agreements.</td>
<td>Directorate of available markets and agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.0 HOW TO SUSTAIN MODEL VILLAGES

For sustainable model villages, mechanisms for achieving sustainability needs to be implemented in all phases of model village establishment. The mechanisms are as follows:

- Monitor quality participation of all gender categories in village development programmes and projects.
- Capacity development for villages to organize and manage themselves in order to establish and maintain development interventions e.g. seed/inputs, micro-finance and food banks and community revolving fund.
- Communities to be linked to services such as health. Voluntary counseling and testing, micro financing.
- Promote community based organizations of different disciplines.
- Model village to operate within the existing decentralized structures. The model village main committees and subcommittees has to be elected by the village.
- Participatory monitoring and evaluation of village programmes and project activities through joint review meetings, joint supervision, formal reports from village and feedback on the reports.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

Model village Approach aims at empowering communities to take control of their destiny. The outcome of using the approach is total transformation of the villages socially, economically and culturally. It helps to ensure that service
providers responds to demands and needs of rural communities in an integrated, complementary and phased manner for sustainable impact.