



Water For People—Malawi Country Strategy

2007-2011

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Introduction

Water For People is an international nongovernmental organisation (NGO) with its headquarters office in Denver, Colorado U.S.A. Its vision is a world where all people have access to safe drinking water and sanitation; a world where no one suffers or dies from a water- or sanitation-related disease. It has been active in Malawi since 1997, supporting a range of small water and sanitation projects implemented by Malawian organisations. Its programme in Malawi, known as Water For People—Malawi, has passed through a transitional stage during 2006 marked by changes of staff and of governance arrangements. At the same time, Water For People's headquarters office has improved the clarity of strategic planning of its international programmes and introduced more stringent requirements for the standards to be followed by the management of each international programme.

These changes, both in Malawi and at the headquarters office, logically suggested that Water For People—Malawi should prepare a new country strategy. Water For People—Malawi had strategic documents in the past but these documents lacked the rigour and clarity now required. So this document has been developed during the period of May-September 2006.

This strategy was prepared through a participatory process led by the Water For People—Malawi Country Coordinator, Kate Harawa, and supported by a consultant, Jon Lane. Internal stakeholders (Water For People—Malawi staff and Advisory Board members) were involved throughout the process, notably at a workshop on 27 May 2006. External stakeholders (Government of Malawi, multilateral and bilateral support agencies, international and local NGOs) were involved at a workshop on 22 June 2006 and by correspondence.

This country strategy draws inspiration from the global Water For People Strategic Plan for 2007-2011. Water For People's Board and headquarters office staff have also been involved at various stages, mainly through the Regional International Programs Associate Manager, Wende Valentine.

The country strategy shows that Water For People—Malawi will develop from being a small NGO supporting various individual projects to a significant player in the water sector in Malawi with a coherent strategic work programme. This document will guide the work of Water For People—Malawi during the time period 2007-2011. It is not a rigid blueprint, but a reasoned explanation of Water For People—Malawi's principles and priorities with indications on how these will be implemented. Its principal audience is Water For People—Malawi's own staff and actual or potential partner organisations, while its secondary audience is Water For People's Denver staff, Water For People—Canada, actual or potential donors, as well as the Water For People Board of Directors.

Water For People—Malawi welcomes comments and suggestions about this document and its implementation.

1. Review of Water and Sanitation in Malawi

1.1 Demographic, Economic and Social Situation of the Country

Malawi is a small landlocked country in southern Africa. It occupies part of the Great Rift Valley, together with escarpments and plateaux on both sides of the valley. Its climate

comprises a short rainy season and long dry season, and in recent years it has experienced increasing variability of rainfall and incidence of drought.

Malawi has a population of 12 million people¹, which is growing at 3 percent per annum. Over 80 percent of people live in rural areas and practise subsistence farming. The rural population density is unusually high compared to most African countries, due mainly to migration during the colonial era and during the civil war in Mozambique. Life expectancy at birth has fallen to 36. Under-five mortality remains high at 133 per 1,000 live births. Maternal mortality is among the worst in the world at around 1,000 per 100,000 live births. The main causes of morbidity and mortality are HIV/AIDS, malaria, respiratory infections and water-related diseases. Cholera is endemic in Malawi and flares up during the rainy season in most years.

Malawi is an extremely poor country. For example, its Human Development Index of 0.388 ranks it 165 out of 177 countries in the world. Its GDP of about U.S. \$180/person/year places it among the poorest countries. This figure is an average and masks huge inequalities: the poorest 70 percent of the population own only 2 percent of the wealth. With minimal industry or mining, Malawi's national economy relies on basic agricultural exports, notably tobacco, sugar and tea. Given the low value of these commodities and the inherent inequity of the global trade system, Malawi experiences a chronic balance of payments deficit and relies on international grants or loans to prop up its economy. After years of economic mismanagement before the 2004 elections, the current president, His Excellency Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika, is prioritising national economic recovery and clamping down on corruption and uncontrolled public expenditure. External donors are returning and interest rates are declining, but it will take years before these macro-economic improvements benefit the majority of ordinary Malawians.

Decentralisation of governmental authority from the national to local level proceeds, as in many African countries. Its pace is slow, due partly to the acute shortage of qualified and experienced staff at district level and partly to the lack of a monitored or enforced time-bound plan for the decentralisation.

Malawi has a heterogeneous ethnic and religious composition in which the various groups live together with minimal tensions between them. Malawians have a strong sense of national identity and a determination to avoid the ethnic and religious problems that have affected many African countries over recent years.

1.2 Water Resources, Water and Sanitation Coverage and Problems

On a map, Malawi appears blessed with water in the form of Lake Malawi, but the lake is in the bottom of the Rift Valley, while most Malawians live up on the plateaux, so the water is scarcely usable for economic purposes. Water resources management is in its infancy in Malawi. Designed water storage capacity is 9cubic meters per person, one of the lowest figures in the world and a quarter of that of Ethiopia, for example². Irrigation is minimal. Catchments are inadequately protected from deforestation. Over 90 percent of Malawians use firewood or charcoal for cooking, and consequently it is said to have the highest rate of deforestation in Africa.

The water and sanitation coverage statistics for Malawi are uncertain. The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP)'s figures for 2002 are as follows:

¹ All statistics are from the 2004 Human Development Report and 2004 Demographic and Health Survey unless otherwise noted.

² World Bank Malawi water sector review (2004).

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	Urban	Rural	Total
Safe water	96%	62%	67%
Adequate sanitation	66%	42%	46%

These figures may be over-estimates for the following reasons. The urban water figure masks the situation in the unplanned peri-urban settlements that are not included in official statistics. The rural water figure may fail to account properly for the significant percentage of constructed facilities that are not actually working³. As for sanitation, the usefulness of the figures depends on the definition of adequate sanitation. Almost all the facilities in Malawi are traditional pit latrines, the majority of which are merely holes in the ground inadequate to prevent faecal-oral disease transmission. The JMP recognises this and has reduced its previous estimates to arrive at the above figures, but most major agencies active in Malawi, including the government itself, estimate rural sanitation coverage at 30 percent or less.

The obstacles to progress in the water and sanitation sector in Malawi include the following:

- Until recently, there had been little political leadership on water and sanitation issues. Water is not prominent in the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) or its successor, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy.
- Politicians see water as a short-term political tool to win popularity or votes, and favour certain places or regions. They devise various funds and mechanisms that tend to function separately from the mainstream government programme.
- Historically, people depended on the government for maintenance. Since the government ended this responsibility, people have not been adequately trained or motivated to exercise ownership and maintenance of water services. Some people, especially in cities, vandalise infrastructure and waste water.
- Agencies working in the sector do not coordinate well with each other at the local, district or national level. Many rural agencies are city-based and may lack real empathy for rural people. Some agencies continue to implement programmes directly rather than through or with the communities.
- At the local level, powerful people may affect sustainability by abusing their power. For example, leaders allocate water points for political purposes, not according to need. Maintenance committee members and/or traditional leaders misuse the funds that have been raised from the community and fail to account for them, so people stop contributing more money.
- Agencies offer communities a limited choice of technology. Wrong technologies are used; most commonly boreholes are installed where shallow wells would be cheaper and more sustainable. Equipment such as pumps are used for which spare parts are unavailable due to lack of a reliable distribution mechanism across the country. There is a shortage of technically-competent people to supervise work and ensure its technical quality.
- People cannot afford the capital contributions that most agencies request for water supplies, the material costs for sanitation, or the water tariffs in urban areas. People living with chronic conditions such as HIV/AIDS and their relatives who care for them, are unable to work to relieve their poverty.
- Many people who lack water, sanitation and hygiene services do not know what to request, or from whom. They are commonly either not informed or wrongly informed by the various agencies. Many people are illiterate and therefore unable to learn about the importance of water, sanitation and hygiene.

³ An ongoing national water point mapping project, led by the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council Malawi chapter, is indicating rural water coverage of 57 percent.

- Malawi's climate is dry and increasingly unpredictable, with surface and groundwater resources becoming depleted. Catchments are degraded, so spring and stream sources for gravity-flow supplies dry up.

1.3 Sector Agencies

The Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development (MoIWD) is the government agency responsible for water and, since 2004, for sanitation. Until recently its leadership has been weak, it suffers from staff shortages, and its posts at district level are lowly-graded within the civil service hierarchy, which makes it difficult for post-holders to assert their authority there. Several other ministries are involved in water, sanitation and hygiene. For example, the Ministry of Health and Population has an Environmental Health Unit working on sanitation and hygiene. The Ministry of Local Government is responsible for decentralisation and local government reform. The Ministry of Gender and Community Services leads on community development work. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs has a role in water resources management.

Five public sector water boards supply water to the cities and towns, while urban sanitation and sewerage remain the duty of municipal authorities. Malawi's 28 district assemblies are nominally responsible for rural water and sanitation but lack the capacity for this work.

Among the multilateral agencies, UNICEF is most prominent in the sector with a long involvement in water, especially in school sanitation. The World Bank financed a large water project that ended in 2003 and is currently planning a successor project to start in 2007. The European Union has a large programme in Malawi, including some in water. The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council has a Malawi chapter working mainly on water point mapping. The Global Water Partnership has a Malawi country partnership working on national integrated water resources management.

There are few bilateral agencies active in development in Malawi. Of them, the governments of Canada and Japan support significant work in water, while those of the U.S.A. and U.K. support a little; Norway and Germany have recently withdrawn from the sector because water is not given as a priority in the Malawi PRSP.

There are estimated to be several hundred Malawian faith-based and civil society organisations working in water. Most of them are small and work in isolation. A few are larger and do high quality work in water and sanitation. Several international NGOs work in water; most of their programmes are descended from relief projects started a decade ago when there were over a million Mozambican refugees in Malawi.

The private sector is hardly active in water in Malawi, other than a proliferation of borehole-drilling companies. There are a few small companies that make and sell handpumps and spare parts, and consultancies that provide design and construction services to government and NGO projects. International private companies are absent.

1.4 Policies and Working Methods

MoIWD is responsible for formulating policy. Its policy on water, published in 2004, is in line with current thinking around the world on topics such as community-based management, decentralisation and use of appropriate technologies. For some years the country's previous political leaders favoured new construction, especially boreholes. However the new government has recently modified the policy to prioritise rehabilitating existing but non-functional infrastructure rather than constructing new infrastructure, and using surface water rather than groundwater sources. MoIWD is currently leading a participatory process to

create a national sanitation policy, which also reflects the latest thinking and best practice. Overall, MoIWD's stated intention is to withdraw from implementation to policy, regulation and monitoring. It leads the water sector coordination, mainly through a committee that includes all the main multilateral and bilateral donors and representatives of the water boards, NGOs and other stakeholder groups and meets monthly.

The donors active in water in Malawi follow the latest globally-agreed policies. For example, they place high importance on attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Several donors are encouraging the government to adopt a sector-wide programmatic approach to the water sector, but this will take some years to develop.

With a few exceptions of organisations that follow the government's official policies and implement excellent programmes, the Malawian and international NGOs tend to work in an uncoordinated manner and follow whatever policies and working methods they wish. This is confusing to the communities and not helpful in terms of overall sector coordination. The larger NGOs have recently formed a network for water and sanitation (the WES NGO Network) that is addressing these problems.

The two most common technologies in rural water are gravity-flow piped supplies, which by the early 1990s served two million people but have subsequently fallen into disrepair, and boreholes, which have until recently been greatly favoured by politicians but which show high breakdown rates. Sanitation technology is almost universally the traditional pit latrine, although a few agencies have tried to introduce innovative or improved latrine types. In the absence of a national sanitation policy to date, most agencies either do no sanitation work or just subsidise construction of a few latrines.

1.5 Sector funding

The public sector's annual expenditure on water supply and sanitation has been affected by the political circumstances around the change of government. It declined from U.S. \$17 million in 2003/2004 to U.S. \$9 million in 2004/2005 and in 2005/2006, of which the majority comes from external support agencies. Some 97.5 percent of the water and sanitation budget is allocated to water, and 2.5 percent to sanitation. The urban/rural subdivision is not recorded.

Financial information from nongovernmental sources is not collected. But it can be estimated from the water point mapping work (mentioned in section 1.2 above) which indicates that the majority of water points in the country were installed by unknown or unmonitored organisations. Allowing for their lower unit costs, funding from nongovernmental sources might be in the range of U.S. \$10-20 million per year.

There is no official estimate of the cost of achieving the water and sanitation MDGs in Malawi. Unofficial estimates of financial flows and of people to be served suggest that the current financing of about U.S. \$20-30 million is enough to achieve the water MDG (although it is not well-targeted at the poorest people) but not nearly sufficient to achieve the sanitation MDG.

2. Water For People

2.1 Global Strategy

Water For People helps people in developing countries improve their quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities and health and hygiene education programmes.

Its guiding principles are the following:

- Water For People believes in the dignity of all people and that access to safe drinking water and effective sanitation are basic human rights.
- Water For People believes drinking water, sanitation and hygiene problems are most effectively solved using local resources. Local communities must be the driving force in all Water For People programmes to make sure solutions are sustainable.
- Water For People believes in the power of partnerships. It searches out trusted partners who share its vision and work together to build long-term relationships based on trust.
- Water For People keeps its promises and manages its resources effectively and efficiently.

Water For People's four overall goals by 2011 are the following:

- to grow to provide sustainable water and sanitation services to at least 1,000 new people per day⁴,
- to enhance and replicate its successful international programmes model to increase its impact within existing programme countries and double its programme countries from 5 to 10,
- to develop its financial resources to support the growth in its programmes, to achieve a 2011 annual revenue of \$12 million⁵,
- to strive to exceed a goal of 85 percent⁶ of revenue applied to international programmes and to be consistently ranked in the top tier of NGOs by independent third-party evaluators.

This global strategy provides a common vision to which Water For People—Malawi is wholly committed. Water For People—Malawi's country strategy is designed to follow these guiding principles and to contribute to these overall goals.

2.2 History in Malawi

Water For People started work in Malawi in 1997 through personal contacts between some potential partners and the staff from the headquarters in the U.S.A. The first country coordinator, Alfred Mhone, lived in Blantyre, so he established Water For People—Malawi's office there. He himself started work as a contractor to Water For People rather than as a staff member, and he set up the relationships with the partners in a similar way as individual contracts rather than as ongoing partnerships. As the years passed, Water For People—Malawi remained very small, consisting of the country coordinator and no other staff. The country coordinator fell ill in 2004 and was on sick leave for most of 2005, so Water For People—Malawi's work came to a virtual standstill. He left Water For People—Malawi in late 2005, and sadly died in early 2006. His successor, Kate Harawa, started work in December

⁴ from 200 in 2005.

⁵ from \$3.9 million in 2006.

⁶ from approximately 80 percent in 2006.

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2005, revived contacts with the existing partners, recruited support staff and initiated this strategic planning process.

During the period 1997-2005, Water For People—Malawi supported an assortment of projects proposed and implemented mainly by its existing partners. Most of the projects were successful and have served tens of thousands of Malawians with water, sanitation and hygiene education⁷, but Water For People—Malawi lacked a strategically coherent work programme. Water For People—Malawi's relationships with its partners were essentially reactive, dependent on them to suggest and generate the Water For People—Malawi workload, rather than strategic. It did not use objective criteria to select partners, geographical areas, or types of projects. It concentrated on field projects and did little capacity building of the partner organisations, nor advocacy and policy work within the Malawian water sector. So it worked more as a low-profile project manager than a development agency. This method of working developed mainly because Water For People—Malawi started informally and continued as a one-person organisation.

As to governance, Water For People—Malawi has an unusual history. First, the Government of Malawi's Ministry of Gender registered Water For People as an international NGO in November 2000. Then, after the NGO Act of 2001 was passed, this registration was confirmed by the NGO Board. But then, for reasons that are not now clear but may have been based on a misunderstanding of the NGO Act, Water For People—Malawi also registered separately with the Ministry of Justice as a Malawian Association with a Board of Trustees. So Water For People and Water For People—Malawi had a dual existence. Consequently the lines of governance responsibility were not clear, which made it difficult to establish strategic policy control over the work of the country coordinator. Now in 2006, Water For People headquarters in the U.S.A. and the Board of Trustees in Malawi are resolving the ambiguous governance status by dissolving the Malawian Association and transforming its Board of Trustees into an Advisory Committee for Water For People—Malawi as an international NGO.

Water For People—Malawi is now ready to expand its work. The main factors driving this expansion include the following:

- There is a high need for water and sanitation in Malawi.
- The government of Malawi is giving strong leadership in water and sanitation.
- Water For People's global strategy will provide additional funding (as described in the global strategy funding goals).
- Water For People—Malawi's staff and governance problems have been overcome.

Water For People—Malawi has several options for this expansion, which are analysed in section 3 below.

3. Analysis of Options for Water For People in Malawi

3.1 Options for Working in Partnerships

Water For People's global strategy is to work through partner organisations and not as a direct implementer. So working in partnerships is a non-negotiable element of Water For People—Malawi's country strategy. To date, Water For People—Malawi has been doing this, although many of its relationships have been more like contracts than partnerships. The

⁷ Water For People—Malawi is appointing consultants to evaluate the impact of all these projects, to report in 2007.

difference is that a partnership is a long-term relationship between two organisations that may have different characteristics but treat each other as equals working together to achieve a common goal, whereas a contract is a single transaction in which one organisation undertakes to carry out specified work funded by another.

Under Water For People's global strategy, Water For People—Malawi has the option to change some or all of its relationships from contracts to true partnerships. Each partnership would achieve a long-term programme of field work, not just a single project. Each would involve the commitment of Water For People—Malawi to build the partner's capacity both in implementing the field programme and in supporting functions such as informing the public, training people, monitoring and evaluation, fundraising and advocacy. The ultimate goal of the partnership is to grow capacity over time to the extent that the partner organisations become self-sufficient. This approach is desirable in developmental terms. The downside is that this approach is expensive and time-consuming compared to Water For People—Malawi's previous work of solely funding projects.

Water For People—Malawi also has to decide whether to continue working with all of its existing partners or to end the relationships with some of them. To make that decision, Water For People—Malawi needs objective criteria for selecting new partners and evaluating existing ones (see section 5.2 below).

3.2 Balance Between Field Programmes and Policy Work

Many of the obstacles to progress listed in section 1.2 can only be solved by advocacy and policy work rather than by project work. This has not been one of Water For People—Malawi's strengths in the past. So Water For People—Malawi now has the option to do more policy, advocacy and public educational work, such as the following:

- improving national-level water sector coordination mechanisms and the adherence to them by NGOs,
- improving dissemination of existing policies,
- campaigning for prominence to water, sanitation and hygiene in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy,
- encouraging other agencies to work in the same way that it does,
- communicating about water and sanitation issues to the general public.

The main justification for doing this is that the advocacy work can help larger numbers of poor people to improve their water and sanitation than Water For People—Malawi's field programmes alone. Advocacy also boosts the organisation's image, which in turn makes it more likely to be listened to by others.

The main risk is that advocacy work can become divorced from fieldwork, which may undermine the credibility of the organisation in the eyes of the other sector agencies.

3.3 Options for Geographical Coverage of Field Programmes

Water For People—Malawi must decide strategically whether to continue its existing system of supporting projects all over the country or to concentrate on one geographical area (for example one district or one region).

Some arguments in favour of wide geographical coverage are:

- to be able to target the greatest needs anywhere in Malawi,
- to avoid committing all its resources to one single area,

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- to allocate external resources equitably across the three regions of Malawi (this would be recognised by politicians, for whom this is a sensitive issue),
- to demonstrate its seriousness as a national-level sector agency not a local one,
- to be able to continue to support existing partners.

Some arguments in favour of geographical concentration are:

- to use resources efficiently by concentrating them in one area,
- to achieve a better impact with limited resources,
- to contribute measurably to national achievement of targets,
- hence to be more recognisable as a significant contributor to the national effort,
- to contribute more effectively to the decentralisation policy.

3.4 Balance Between Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Water For People recognises that the major benefits to people's health and quality of life come from improved water, sanitation and hygiene together. So Water For People—Malawi has always aimed to support water, sanitation and hygiene promotion although it may not have consistently achieved this. The strategic planning process gives Water For People—Malawi the opportunity to ensure that water, sanitation and hygiene are equitably balanced in all its work.

There is one extra consideration. In Malawi, improved sanitation and hygiene lag far behind improved water, so Water For People—Malawi could opt positively to support more sanitation and hygiene promotion than water – for example by supporting sanitation and hygiene work in communities that already have water.

3.5 Balance Between Urban and Rural Work

Water For People's global strategy states that it will dedicate most of its resources to rural programmes and also adapt its programme approach to serve people in peri-urban areas. Water For People—Malawi will contribute to this plan in a reasoned manner.

Water For People—Malawi recognises that four million rural Malawians lack access to safe water and seven or eight million lack adequate sanitation and hygiene, while the urban figures are half a million and a million respectively. So the sheer weight of numbers suggests that Water For People—Malawi should concentrate on rural work.

On the other hand, migration from rural to urban areas is increasing, and the problems associated with peri-urban water and sanitation are acknowledged to be particularly difficult. Water For People—Malawi has been building up experience in dealing with these problems through its existing project work. So it has the option to expand its urban work further.

3.6 Preferred Options

Water For People—Malawi has consulted its internal and external stakeholders on the options described in sections 3.1 to 3.5 above and has made the following decisions.

Partnerships

Water For People—Malawi aims to make multi-year commitments to its future partners to support their organisational development and their work (subject to its annual financial planning cycle). These future partners may include some of its existing ones, others may be new ones. Some may be District Assemblies, others local NGOs or CBOs. Water For

People—Malawi will also explore possible partnerships with the private sector, recognising that the sector may be currently weak and fragmented but may still have an important role to play.

The corollary of this long-term approach to partnership is that Water For People—Malawi will not support organisations that just ask for one-off grants for individual projects, as it has done in the past.

Field programmes and policy work

Water For People—Malawi will build up a portfolio comprising field programmes and policy, advocacy and research work. This portfolio will develop sequentially. Initially Water For People—Malawi will concentrate on field programmes, then the policy, advocacy and research work will grow based on the field programmes. The policy work may in turn influence the field programmes. The policy, advocacy and research work may be carried out by Water For People—Malawi itself, by its partners, or in networks with other agencies.

All the field programmes and policy work will be monitored and evaluated, as described in section 7.1 below.

Geographical coverage

This is a difficult issue for Water For People—Malawi, mainly because its decision will directly affect its relationships with its existing partners, which are located across the country. Following careful consideration, Water For People—Malawi's decision is to:

- keep its office location in Blantyre,
- avoid stretching its staff and finances too thinly across the country,
- concentrate most of its resources in one main working area comprising part or all of Chikwawa District in the Southern Region. This district has been selected by Water For People—Malawi in consultation with external stakeholders, on the basis of the needs of the people and absence of other agencies working there.
- allocate some resources to smaller partnership field programmes in both the Central and Northern Regions. The locations for these programmes are currently (2006) being selected by Water For People—Malawi on the basis of the needs of the people, the presence of strong existing Water For People—Malawi partners and the absence of other agencies working there.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Water For People—Malawi will support work comprised of either of the following: water, sanitation and hygiene integrated together, or sanitation and hygiene integrated together (for communities that already have water). It will not support any work comprised of water alone. This work will comply with government standards and policies, as described in section 4.1 below.

Rural and urban work

Water For People—Malawi will support both rural and peri-urban work, using the people's need as the most important criterion. It recognises from the demography of Malawi that the significant majority of its work will be in rural areas, but it will not set rigid proportions of funding to the two areas.

4. Objectives of this Country Strategy

This country strategy is intended to conform with Water For People's global Strategic Plan and with the options chosen in section 3.6 above. Its three components of field programmes, capacity-building of partners and policy work complement each other to maximise overall impact within the expenditure budgets tabulated in section 6.1 below. The objectives of these three components are as follows.

4.1 Field Programmes

By 2011, Water For People plans globally to serve at least 365,000 people per year with both water and sanitation as well as hygiene education. The five existing country programmes will need to contribute significantly to this achievement, alongside five new programmes. So Water For People—Malawi should be planning strategically to serve a target figure in the region of 40,000 people per year.

In Malawi the number of people lacking sanitation is approximately double that lacking water. So Water For People—Malawi will aim to serve twice as many people with sanitation and hygiene as it does with water, sanitation and hygiene. There are no standard agreed costs for each person served in Malawi, but other agencies estimate approximately U.S. \$20 for water and U.S. \$10 for sanitation and hygiene in rural areas and perhaps double these figures in urban areas. So, using weighted averages and using the budgets tabulated in section 6.1 below, Water For People—Malawi aims by 2011 to be serving at least 20,000 poor people per year with integrated water, sanitation and hygiene services and at least an additional 20,000 poor people per year with sanitation and hygiene services only.

Approximately 80 percent of those people will be in rural areas: their water service will achieve the national standard of 40 litres of safe water per person per day at a coverage of 250 people per point source or 125 people per piped tapstand, and their sanitation service will achieve the national standard of an improved latrine for each household that safely disposes of faeces plus corresponding facilities for schools and health centres. Approximately 20 percent of those people will be in urban areas: their water service will achieve the standard set in the appropriate urban area, and their sanitation service will achieve the same national standard.

4.2 Relationship with Partners

Water For People—Malawi will build the capacity of four to six⁸ partner organisations in Malawi to implement high-quality water, sanitation and hygiene field programmes and policy, advocacy and research work. These are the organisations that will implement the field work quantified in section 4.1 above.

The objective of Water For People—Malawi's capacity-building work is that these partner organisations will become strong enough to continue to implement such work using funds from other sources, not to be dependent on Water For People—Malawi only.

4.3 Advocacy and Policy Work

Water For People—Malawi and its partners and networks will carry out advocacy, policy and research work, based on its field programmes, in order to influence the work of other

⁸ Provisionally: Chikwawa District Assembly plus one to three NGO and/or private sector partners in Chikwawa district in the Southern Region; one NGO or private sector partner in one location in the Central Region; and one NGO or private sector partner in one location in the Northern Region. (See section 5.2 below for more details.)

agencies working in water and sanitation in Malawi. This advocacy and policy work will indirectly serve more people with water and sanitation than the field programmes, although their precise numbers are difficult to set and monitor. The quantifiable objectives of this advocacy work cannot therefore be counted in people served but in field visits, workshops, publications and in the opinions, actions and responses of other agencies. These objectives will be set in Water For People—Malawi's successive annual plans as the advocacy and policy work becomes established.

5. Activities under this Country Strategy

Water For People—Malawi's main operational planning documents are its annual plans and budgets, written on a calendar year basis. The following sections indicate the major features of the activities that will be described in more detail in those operational documents.

5.1 Indicative Description of Field Programmes

Respect the local communities as the central driving force of all Water For People—Malawi-supported fieldwork. Follow the now well-established principles of community-based management and of demand-responsiveness.

Offer communities an integrated package comprising water (unless they already have water), sanitation and hygiene, and explain the benefits of such an integrated approach.

Provide appropriate and timely information to community members to help them to make their decisions.

In water, offer communities a broad choice of technical solutions appropriate to the local topography. Promote piped water supplies from surface sources rather than boreholes, in line with the latest government policy. Encourage communities to rehabilitate existing non-functional infrastructure rather than to construct new infrastructure. Incorporate community-based water resources management and water quality protection and/or treatment into all the water projects to ensure that the quality and quantity of the water is sustained and to avoid over-extraction.

In sanitation, ensure the work corresponds to the forthcoming National Sanitation Policy. (Essentially this means following a marketing-led sanitation approach as opposed to a subsidy-led one, offering a choice of simple but adequate sanitation options, working on sanitation for schools and health facilities as well as households. All of these are already Water For People—Malawi's policies.) Design sanitation work and facilities to respond to the people's own priorities and motivation.

In hygiene promotion, concentrate on a small number of achievable and important behaviour change messages (e.g., use the latrine; wash hands after using the latrine and after handling children's faeces and before preparing or eating food; protect drinking water stored in the home). Do not lessen the impact or confuse people by trying to convey too many different messages.

Ensure that project timescales are set by the time taken to change people's behaviour, not by the time taken to finish the construction work.

5.2 Indicative Description of Work with Partners

Use clear criteria to select two to four partners in Chikwawa District in the Southern Region (one of which will be the District Assembly and the others will probably be local NGOs or Community Based Organisations (CBOs) or private sector organisations) and one partner in each of the other two field work locations in the Central and Northern Regions (which will probably be local NGOs or CBOs or private sector organisations). The criteria include the following:

- experience working in water, sanitation and hygiene
- adherence to Water For People's guiding principles (see section 2.1 above)
- geographical location
- links to the users' communities
- interest in long-term partnership with Water For People—Malawi

Provide long-term support to the selected partners to achieve the following:

- To increase partners' ability to implement high-quality water, sanitation and hygiene programmes.
- To increase partners' ability to communicate their experiences, influence policies, advocate particular ideas, research and publish their work.
- To increase the ability of the Chikwawa District Assembly to plan, coordinate and monitor water, sanitation and hygiene programmes in that district.

Use a range of methods for building partners' capacities including training, mentoring, and visits to other partners.

5.3 Indicative Description of Policy Work

Use Water For People—Malawi's fieldwork experience to identify policy issues to research and advocate. Do not talk about issues unrelated to the field programme.

Improve documentation and management of information. Use a wide range of communication techniques (e.g., personal contacts, meetings, conferences, publications, websites, study tours, mass media) for the advocacy work. Use communications to raise the profile of Water For People—Malawi's work and of its partners and their work.

Play an active and responsible role in national- and district-level sector coordination, mutual learning and sharing lessons especially, but not only, among the NGOs working in water.

Support the Ministry of Water Development (MoIWD)'s leadership on water and sanitation policy issues. Cooperate with MoIWD and other sector agencies to advocate the importance of water in the general debates within Malawi and to influence other external support agencies to increase their commitment to water, sanitation and hygiene in Malawi.

Link in-country policy and advocacy work with Water For People's global policy and advocacy work, which is still being developed.

Be aware that an office location in Blantyre is a logistical disadvantage since most policy meetings and discussions are in Lilongwe. This can be mitigated by membership of national networks, by working through publications and websites, and by planning regular visits to Lilongwe for this purpose.

5.4 Programme Management

Design and manage the programme to be rapidly scalable so it can accommodate increases in Water For People's revenue.

Use the values and beliefs in Water For People's global strategy to govern how Water For People—Malawi and its staff behave.

Maximise learning both from Water For People—Malawi's own work with partners and from the work of others.

Obtain advice and support from Water For People—Malawi's Advisory Committee, while being accountable in management and governance terms to Water For People's headquarters in the U.S.A.

5.5 Human Resources Development

Develop a staffing structure and job descriptions that will ensure the delivery of the country strategy, covering the full range of activities in it (e.g., field work supervision, partnership management, training, advocacy, research, communications, fundraising, finance, administration, monitoring and evaluation). Ensure that the structure takes account of possible staff attrition due to illnesses such as HIV/AIDS that are prevalent in Malawi.

Recruit, develop and retain a high performing team of staff. Provide them with clear, fair and appropriate employment terms and conditions.

Ensure that staff members have the skills and experience to undertake their job descriptions.

5.6 Transition from Previous Strategy to This One

Plan, implement and monitor a transitional phase in late 2006 and early 2007 to bridge from Water For People—Malawi's ongoing work to its new work under this country strategy.

Fulfil Water For People—Malawi's legal and moral obligation to the people benefiting from its current projects.

Manage sensitively the conclusion of Water For People—Malawi's relationships with those of its existing partners that will not be selected as its future partners (see section 5.2 above). Water For People—Malawi will not be able to please them all and must be prepared to deal with their disappointment.

6. Finance

6.1 Indicative Annual Expenditure Budgets 2007-2011

The global Water For People Strategic Plan states that it plans to grow in existing programme countries, including Malawi. Annual expenditure⁹ is a simple indicator of that growth.

Water For People—Malawi's expenditure budget for 2006 is \$267,000 which is below the average of the five existing country programmes. By 2011, Water For People aims to have

⁹ Water For People plans and budgets according to calendar years.

Water For People—Malawi Country Strategy 2007-2011

10 country programmes spending 85 percent of \$12 million, i.e., \$10 million. The five existing programmes will need to be in the vanguard of this spending increase. So Water For People—Malawi could reasonably aim to increase its annual expenditure to \$1 million by 2011. There is certainly enough demand in Malawi to spend this sum, especially since Water For People—Malawi will be broadening its range of work to include policy and research work in addition to field programmes.

Financial growth from 2006 to 2007 will be fairly slow, as the new staff members are recruited, new projects are planned, and existing projects are completed. Growth over the following few years can be faster as the staff and systems will be able to cope with spending the budget well in accordance with this country strategy. The indicative annual expenditure budgets could then be:

Year	Expenditure Budget
2006	\$267,000
2007	\$350,000
2008	\$500,000
2009	\$650,000
2010	\$850,000
2011	\$1,000,000

6.2 Indicative Annual Income Budgets from Various Sources 2007-2011

The main source of Water For People—Malawi’s funds will be Water For People’s headquarters office in the U.S.A. As part of this country strategy, Water For People—Malawi will also explore the possibility of in-country fundraising. It has already made initial contacts with potential corporate and voluntary sector donors in Malawi. It will now aim to develop fundable projects to raise at least 10 percent of its income from funding sources in country by 2011. This aim is reflected in the tabulation below.

Year	Income from head office	Income in-country
2006	\$267,000	0
2007	\$350,000	0
2008	\$475,000	\$25,000
2009	\$600,000	\$50,000
2010	\$775,000	\$75,000
2011	\$900,000	\$100,000

In order to do this, Water For People—Malawi will do the following:

- research the donors that have funds available in country and/or in the region to give to international NGOs,
- learn about their priorities in water and sanitation,
- match those priorities to Water For People—Malawi’s portfolio of work,
- document measurable evidence of the success of Water For People—Malawi’s existing projects,
- prepare project proposals for funding (these are likely to be replications of successful existing Water For People—Malawi-funded projects rather than completely new projects),
- periodically host potential donors, either from North America or Malawi.

In addition to Water For People—Malawi’s own in-country fundraising, Water For People’s global strategy states that its country offices will promote and support the efforts of its in-

country partners in seeking financial support for their projects and initiatives. Water For People—Malawi will do this as part of its capacity-building work.

7. Monitoring the Implementation of this Country Strategy

7.1 Monitoring and Reporting on the Work

It is part of Water For People's global strategy to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation processes and to develop a reporting system to measure performance against objectives. Water For People—Malawi will comply fully with this system.

Water For People—Malawi will develop systematic and practical monitoring and evaluation procedures that will ensure efficient and effective implementation of high-quality water, sanitation and hygiene programmes with measurable and sustainable impact. This is part of Water For People—Malawi's core work, not an added-on element. In the past this has been a weakness of Water For People—Malawi, so it will pay special attention to improving it.

The number of poor people served with sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services will be the most important indicator. Water For People—Malawi will define and document these systematically, and will count actual numbers of people, not just numbers of households with an assumed average size. Projects that provide a partial improvement, such as gravity-flow rehabilitations, will apply fractions to the numbers of users.

Water For People—Malawi's monitoring will be compatible with, and integrated into, the government's national monitoring system for water and sanitation which is currently (2006) being established. It will use the national standards for water quality, water quantity, service level, and health impacts etc., which are currently being reviewed by the government as part of the establishment of the national monitoring system.

Water For People—Malawi will report the results of this monitoring annually, both within Malawi to its partners and to the government and outside Malawi to its headquarters office and donors. It will also commission external evaluations of its work at appropriate intervals in compliance with Water For People's global evaluation policy.

7.2 Reviewing and Replacing This Strategy in Due Course

A five-year strategy gives a clear and confident sense of direction. But needs and external circumstances change, so no strategy should be fixed rigidly for a long period. This country strategy will be reviewed by a consultative process during 2008 or 2009 in order to revise it as needed and to start to develop the next country strategy to guide Water For People—Malawi in the years 2012 onwards.

The next strategy will be decided in sufficient time to enable a smooth transition from one to the next.