



Government of Malawi

Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development

PRESS STATEMENT

RESULTS OF THE 2016 FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

The Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, through the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC), carried out an annual food security assessment exercise during May 2016. The exercise was aimed at assessing the food security situation in the country, and determining the number of people who are likely to be food insecure during the 2016/17 consumption period.

The results of the assessment show that a minimum of **6.5 million people**, or 39 percent of the country's projected population of **16.8 million**, will not be able to meet their annual food requirements during the 2016/17 consumption period. This represents an increase of 129 percent compared with the corresponding figure of 2.8 million people for the 2015/16 consumption period. In order to ensure that the affected people survive up to the next harvest period without disrupting their socio-economic livelihoods, the total humanitarian food assistance that is required is estimated at the equivalent of **493,000 metric tonnes of maize**, with an estimated cash value of **MK148 billion**. However, the estimated humanitarian food assistance declines to the equivalent of **375,000 metric tonnes of maize** if we adjust for the fact that some of the affected people may sell their assets in order to acquire food. The cash value for the latter intervention option, which may reduce the future productive and disaster resilience capacities of the affected people, is estimated at **MK113 billion**. The food shortage is largely a result of the El Nino climatic episode experienced across the country during the 2015/16 agricultural season.

The MVAC figures stated above relate to the total food requirement for the vulnerable population only. This is lower than the maize consumption deficit of **790,000 metric tonnes** affecting **8.4 million people**, as reported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development based on the Second Round Crop Estimates released in April 2016. The main difference between the two sets of figures arises from the fact that part of the maize

consumption deficit relates to the consumption needs of those who can afford to procure it on the market, if available, without the need for humanitarian support. The MVAC figures exclude such consumption needs which are, nevertheless, a significant part of the Government's overall intervention plans.

Since the declaration of a State of National Disaster by His Excellency the President, Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, on 12 April 2016, the Government has been collaborating with its development partners to design various interventions in order to assist the affected population. A comprehensive Government Humanitarian Response Plan will be finalised soon, taking into account the MVAC figures reported in this statement. On its part, the Government has allocated the amount of **MK35.5 billion** for maize purchases in the 2016/17 Draft Budget, in addition to the expenditure being incurred in the current fiscal year for immediate relief. Moreover, the Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC) has intensified the procurement of maize and other commodities, to ensure that they are available in all ADMARC selling points. The Government has also intensified the promotion of irrigation programmes as one way of addressing household food deficits in some of the districts.

The Government wishes to express its sincere gratitude for the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders in addressing this situation.

Ronald Mangani
SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY