



C-SAFE MALAWI

Lessons Learned

In

FOOD AID PROGRAMMING



From the C-SAFE Malawi Working Groups:

Nutrition, Chronic Illness, Food for Work, & Commodities

A C-SAFE Learning Activity

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CADECOM	Catholic Development Commission
Co-Guard	Consortium to Cooperatively Guard Women's, Infants' and Children's Nutrition Status through Emergency Supplementary Feeding in Malawi
DPMA	Department of Poverty and Mitigation Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development (U.K.)
FDP	Final Distribution Points
FFW	Food For Work
JEFAP	Joint Emergency Food Aid Program
LSA	Logistics Service Agreement
MUAC	Middle Upper Arm Circumference
NRU	Nutrition Rehabilitation Unit
NGO	Non Government Organization
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
TNP	Targeted Nutrition Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Program
WV	World Vision
RPU	Regional Program Unit

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www.c-safe.org

CONTEXT

C-SAFE in Southern Africa

In its second year of operation, the Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE) is a groundbreaking linkage of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with the common goal of addressing urgent food security needs in three southern African countries - Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

C-SAFE has taken a 'developmental relief' approach to the food security emergency in these countries. Its relief and recovery programs aim to improve nutritional status, protect productive assets, and support households and communities to strengthen their resilience to current and future food security shocks that affect their well-being and livelihoods.

The consortium has three core NGO members - CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and World Vision (WV) - all working in each of the three countries. There is one additional member in Zambia (ADRA) and six additional members in the Malawi consortium - Africare, Emmanuel International, Malawi Red Cross, Salvation Army, Save the Children UK, and Save the Children US. The regional program unit (RPU) of the consortium is located in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The unique experiences of working in a consortium and embarking on the developmental relief approach present new opportunities for sharing and learning, including examining better practices for programming, and analyzing the benefits and costs of working in a consortium format. The C-SAFE Regional Learning Center has been established to facilitate learning, and provided support to the learning exercise documented herein.

C-SAFE in Malawi

In Malawi, CARE is the lead NGO and is responsible for coordinating program activities and managing sub-grants to six of the nine NGOs. C-SAFE Malawi covered 23 of the 27 districts in the country assisting more than 100,000 households in Year One and approximately 95,500 households in Year Two. Selection of the districts was based on NGO presence in the district as well as acquired past experience during implementation of JEFAP I, a WFP funded program. Similarly, NGO participation in the consortium was based on previous engagement in general food distributions and involvement in the NGO consortium that implemented JEFAP I.

The C-SAFE Malawi consortium is seen by many as a model of collaboration for the region. The NGO consortium benefits from common understanding of strengths and weaknesses of members. The NGOs have gained experience from working together, and have profited from each other's expertise in various sectors. Importantly, there has been a concerted effort to share information and coordinate activities through bi-weekly meetings of technical working groups and a C-SAFE general meeting. The four working groups represented in this document are Nutrition, Chronically Ill, Food for Work, and Commodities, with some additional lessons from CARE as manager of the Consortium.

In an attempt to provide program supervision and ensure adherence to agreed implementation plans, the C-SAFE Country Coordinator endeavoured to visit each partner and conduct a program audit. After several visits to NGO sites, it was realized that visits by the Country Coordinator alone did not provide opportunities to share experiences and learning across the membership, and that additional mechanisms needed to be established to fully exploit the benefits of working as a consortium. The working groups which met regularly to discuss and exchange information on technical issues were given the added responsibility of conducting field visits to learn from one

another's experiences and provide guidance where necessary. The learning in this document is a result of that evolving process.

The Workshop

With the phasing out of C-SAFE planned for the end of September 2004, C-SAFE members in Malawi organized a Lessons Learned Workshop in Lilongwe on August 27, 2004. There were over 50 participants, including C-SAFE staff from Zambia and Zimbabwe and the Regional Program Unit. The workshop sought to explore aspects of learning from the Malawi technical working groups, with expectations that participants will take back lessons learned from the C-SAFE experience to their respective agencies and colleagues and carry them forward into the I-LIFE Development Assistance Program, due to start in October 2004. Participants from the other C-SAFE countries were invited both to share their experiences, and to take back lessons learned and better practices to their respective country programs. By examining programming methodologies, challenges and successes as a group, it is hoped that NGO members will be able to carry some of these lessons forward in the form of improved program quality, and where appropriate, increased harmonization of systems and methods of implementation. Finally, the process has facilitated the identification of areas for joint advocacy where common issues/challenges arise with respect to donor and other stakeholder constraints. Each of the four working groups took different approaches to examining lessons within their technical areas, therefore each is presented in a slightly different manner. Each group prepared a paper from which they presented at the August 27 workshop. An abridged summary of the key lessons from those presentations are contained in this document.



"C-SAFE Malawi Lessons Learned Workshop" Participants

KEY FINDINGS OF WORKING GROUPS

CHRONICALLY ILL WORKING GROUP

In Malawi, the consortium established a technical working group around issues related to one of C-SAFE's regional target categories – the Chronically Ill (CI)– due to the complexity and novel nature of targeting and providing assistance to this vulnerable group. 'Chronic Illness' is used by C-SAFE in all three countries, as a proxy for AIDS, and is defined as follows:

Chronically Ill Individual: An individual experiencing persistent and recurring illness lasting three months or more, which has reduced that person's level of productivity.

The CI working group noted that, "No doubt C-SAFE was a good format for effective working partnerships for the unique programming we were engaged in." In dissecting consortium relationships, and the successes and challenges the consortium and other partners perceived regarding CI programming, the following lessons were uncovered. The group categorized their information into themes: Targeting, TB Programming, M&E and Exit Strategies.

Targeting

Some strong points in C-SAFE targeting were:

- NGOs empowered communities and laid the basis for continued support after phase-out.
- Community leaders and structures were educated on C-SAFE programming objectives, processes, and targeting criteria which eased program implementation, enabled local identification and care of vulnerable households, and facilitated project monitoring by community members.
- Improved physical appearance and health of chronically ill served as motivation to others to support the program.

C-SAFE member agencies agree that partnership with different stakeholders at all levels is the most effective method in fighting HIV/AIDS.

- Chronically Ill Working Group

Challenges faced in targeting:

- Inadequate dissemination of targeting messages by local leaders.
- Limited time for sensitization meetings.
- Wrong perceptions existed of beneficiaries and the definitions of 'chronically ill' and 'orphan'.
- There were examples of abuse of power by community leaders, especially where community structures were weak.
- The attitude existed that chronically ill are unproductive members of society who will die in any case, so why is so much effort being spent on them. C-SAFE continues to struggle to counter this perception.

'Chronically ill' and 'orphan' as categories were defined during the formation of the C-SAFE program, and includes children within households affected by chronic illness. It was recommended that continued analysis should be done to gauge how communities understand/apply these definitions.

The CI working group, as well as other working groups noted that a more thorough and comprehensive sensitization of communities would go a long way in addressing these and other difficulties faced by the program. It was also noted at the workshop that a comprehensive list of issues to be addressed during a 'community sensitization process' has recently been published by C-SAFE's regional Learning Center, and can be found in a study called 'Targeted Food Assistance in the Context of HIV/AIDS'.¹ Better practices in community sensitisation are also cited in the document.

Tuberculosis (TB) Programming



Emmanuel International, in partnership with WFP, also targeted tuberculosis patients. Food rations helped encourage adherence to /completion of TB treatment and facilitated patient recovery. The food reduces side effects of medication and good nutrition complements therapeutic procedures. It is believed that the mortality rate of TB patients was reduced, but this requires more research for confirmation. It was also found that beneficiaries sold fewer of their assets for food when they were enrolled in the TB program. Through the program, TB patients were motivated to go to HIV and AIDS counselling and testing, as well as to utilize other health services including anthropometrics (BMI) and nutrition education sessions.

C-SAFE Beneficiaries Benefit from Targeted Food Interventions

Some challenges faced in TB programming:

- Because there were two food distribution programs, there was potential for duplication.
- Transportation was a challenge, as small quantities of food were required over a vast area, which made deliveries less cost effective. Logistically it was challenging to deliver the correct amounts of food to each TB health center.
- Confusion arose at times when beneficiaries in different locations had the same names.
- As targeting was at the TB health center level (institutional level), people sometimes received food regardless of nutritional or food insecurity status.

Some solutions proffered in terms of improving TB activities are:

- Introduce a waybill for each health center with details of each TB beneficiary and their ration.
- Weigh and package rations before distributions so that distributions are more accurate and efficient.
- Allow staff more time for discussion and sensitization with TB patients.
- Intensify coordination with Ministry of Health staff and TB ward staff as well as increasing collaboration with those organizations also working in targeted communities, such as the National Aids Committee, TB Control Program and other NGOs.

¹ Targeted Food Assistance in the Context of HIV/AIDS – Better Practices in C-SAFE Targeted Food Programming in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe can be downloaded from C-SAFE's website at www.c-safe.org.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Some of the lessons learned by the CI working group with regards to M&E:

- A major benefit of conducting M&E in the consortium format is that the lead agency had generic M&E tools and was able to share this with other agencies. M&E offered a mechanism for soliciting feedback from both beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. For example, consortium-wide focus groups were held with communities in Year 2 of C-SAFE, which were very helpful in gauging community understanding and level of agreement with C-SAFE's targeting criteria. The group looks forward to results from the C-SAFE Final Survey (August 2004), which will not only provide household level feedback, but also help in analyzing the impact of C-SAFE via comparison to baseline data.
- A major constraint identified by the CI working group was the dilemma / difficulty in measuring nutritional status of the chronically ill². In all three C-SAFE countries the program struggled with finding an appropriate way to measure the effect of food on chronic illness. Many viewed it as unethical to measure MUAC and/or weight for height of chronically ill persons, since the most common result would be lack of progress.
- In the future, it was suggested that M&E systems should also measure progress towards exit strategies to ensure that communities are adequately prepared prior to C-SAFE's phase out.

Challenges faced in M&E:

- Beneficiaries were sometimes reluctant to participate in M&E surveys because they feared being dropped from beneficiary lists. They also gave answers that they thought are expected of them, affecting accuracy of data collected.
- More emphasis should be placed on monitoring the impact of food aid on beneficiary communities, rather than the tracking of the commodity. While there was a Malawi-specific M&E plan, there was not enough technical support from the regional office, nor local commitment from the Malawi consortium members to its implementation.
- Information collected by the various M&E tools/survey need to be more fully utilized – as is commonly cited in large food programs -- data collection was prioritized over data analysis and utilization.
- The results of M&E activities should be shared more widely within the consortium and to a wider range of stakeholders including providing regular written updates to District Assemblies and other community based partners so the “way forward” can be discussed together. On-site post-distribution monitoring should be integrated into all food aid programs. It was noted by the C-SAFE Zambia and Zimbabwe participants that these systems have been installed in those countries and tools/methodologies can be shared with Malawi.

• ² In all three C-SAFE countries the program struggled with finding an appropriate way to measure the effect of food on chronic illness. C-SAFE informed donors through regional progress reports that they will not use nutrition indicators where deemed inappropriate, and will instead use focus group discussions and livelihood indicators to determine the effect of food interventions on households hosting CI individuals. This ongoing debate will be under examination by the regional Learning Center in FY05.

In general, there is a need for increased staffing and technical capacity among the consortium members with regards to M&E, as well as greater support on technical issues from the regional office of C-SAFE. It was also noted that in the other two C-SAFE countries, there is an M&E coordinator that is 100% dedicated to C-SAFE, whereas this was not the case in Malawi, also hampering focus and strength of M&E systems. Recruitment of M&E expertise and ongoing capacity building in M&E was a strong recommendation from the CI group for future programming.

Exit Strategies

Cross visits facilitated learning around the development of exit strategies in Year 2 of C-SAFE. NGO visits to Emmanuel International project sites provided a positive example of program exit strategies. The project began implementing exit strategies at the start of Year 2, which included home vegetable gardens, cotton production, produce marketing, and livestock raising by village committees. Through these activities and the provision of targeted food assistance, C-SAFE helped lift the burden on communities to help the chronically ill, while simultaneously building their capacity to assume responsibility to assist these vulnerable groups over time.

The CI working group felt that in general there was a drive toward self-reliance among the beneficiaries. Representatives from the regional office noted the recently published FANTA document (April 2004) entitled "Exit Strategies in Food Programming," which provide significant guidance and excellent examples in planning, implementing and monitoring exit strategies for Title II programs.

Other Better Practices uncovered in C-SAFE Malawi Exit Strategies:

- Communities often developed their own action plans, such as income-generation activities and communal cultivation of cotton, to assist vulnerable households. Through such participation, communities came to appreciate the assets, resources and opportunities that exist within themselves.
- Innovative activities could be shared among consortium members and integrated into their strategies. For example: psycho-social support for children, Positive Living, and training of community-based organizations in proposal writing were included.
- The value of partnerships was also realized by communities, who in turn partnered with other organizations for particular services.
- Exit strategies could be complemented by existing activities of C-SAFE NGOs.

The biggest shortcoming in terms of exit strategies was that discussions for some PVOs began too late in implementation, which not only reduced the time available to have significant impact, but also led to inconsistent approaches, and confusing messages to the communities. Many communities do not feel prepared for the phase-out and are expressing feelings of abandonment and betrayal. It is hoped that this lesson will translate to greater emphasis in planning exit strategies for C-SAFE Zambia and Zimbabwe, where C-SAFE has an additional year of programming before the end of the grant.



Communities often developed their own action plans, such as income-generation activities and communal cultivation of cotton, to assist vulnerable households.

CI Working Group

Challenges identified:

- Additional resources are required to implement exit strategies and were not always available. C-SAFE's objective 3 (building community resilience), which was integral to the developmental relief concept, was not funded by USAID-FFP in any of the three countries. This was perceived by many as having an undermining affect on a smooth exit for the program.
- Some exit strategies require labour-intensive work initially, which CI households may find difficult to do. C-SAFE members continue to look for ways to facilitate community assistance for these households.
- Income-generation activities often need support of longer duration to get off the ground, and are not always successful or able to provide sufficient income to support livelihoods on a short-term basis.
- Because no indicators were defined for phase-out, NGOs have difficulty measuring progress towards phase out and are not held accountable for this progress.
- NGO staff require intensive training on planning, implementation and monitoring of exit strategies. Many staff felt as lacking in knowledge as their beneficiary communities on this subject and found it difficult to face communities with the issues related to phase out.

NUTRITION WORKING GROUP



Partnership

The Nutrition Working Group entered into a complementary relationship with an existing structure, the Consortium to Cooperatively Guard Women's, Infants' and Children's Nutrition Status through Emergency Supplementary Feeding in Malawi (Co-Guard). Co-Guard is a consortium of all the C-SAFE NGOs plus Action Against Hunger, and supported by OFDA and DFID. This consortium, led by Africare, complemented C-SAFE supplementary feeding activities with C-SAFE providing the food commodities, and Co-Guard taking a lead in screening, food distribution, nutrition and health education messages, and technical reporting. Iron tablets, albendazole and vitamin A were also provided as a contribution from UNICEF. Co-Guard also acted as the

representative of the C-SAFE Nutrition Working Group at the Targeted Nutrition Program (TNP), chaired by the Ministry of Health and Populations.

During implementation, C-SAFE and Co-Guard trained Health Surveillance Assistants and Growth Monitoring Volunteers on management of supplementary feeding, identification of beneficiaries and reporting in an effort to build the capacity of health workers and communities to ensure continuity of the program. NGOs provided technical support and facilitated implementation.

The partnering of C-SAFE and Co-Guard resources and objectives is cited widely as effective complementary programming. There were, however, challenges worth noting, with an eye towards proactively addressing these issues under future programming.

- **Clearer definition of roles on Commodity Accounting:** Although, it was clear that C-SAFE would provide the food resources and that Co-Guard would conduct training, there was a need to clarify how Co-Guard would account for food commodities and the types of reports they were expected to provide to C-SAFE.
- **Stronger representation to the Government:** While C-SAFE was represented at the operational level through the working group, there was no representation of C-SAFE in the TNP. This detracted from C-SAFE's ability to build a strong working relationship with the Ministry of Health.
- **Improved planning of resource timelines:** Co-Guard phased out in May, leaving many NGOs without this source of funding to continue activities, especially training of Health Surveillance Assistants and Growth Monitoring Volunteers.

The above described program targets children under five (6-50 months) and pregnant and lactating mothers. The established national guidelines were observed, and include guidance on:

- Identification and selection of beneficiaries through screening using weight for height and Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC)
- Registration of beneficiaries
- Ration size
- Commodity tracking
- Both narrative and statistical reporting

The group found that the strong level of collaboration on the development and implementation of national guidelines enabled common standards, consistency and harmonization of systems with regards to supplementary feeding at an early stage of the program.

Food Basket

The choice of commodities available to the C-SAFE members presented some challenges to program implementation. The Nutrition working group found that beneficiaries did not like the taste of yellow maize meal and cow peas. Interestingly, the CI working group noted that they did not experience similar problems with yellow maize for their target groups. “On the face of it,” said one participant, “you would say that people are not hungry” if they complained about the food. But it is suspected that there are other issues that led to complaints. Those offered at the workshop were:

- Rumors in some communities that the Ministry of Health was adding contraceptives to yellow maize.
- Being a new commodity in the country, it was noted that intense sensitization is required, and this may not have been emphasized enough when it was introduced by members in Malawi. It was observed by C-SAFE Zimbabwe and Zambia that participants underwent intense sensitization around the introduction of bulgar wheat (which was a new commodity). This included communication on the nutritional virtues of bulgar, as well as conducting cooking demonstrations (with dissemination of recipes) which eventually lead to strong acceptance of the food.
- There were instances of complaints that the yellow maize distributed was bitter (possibly due to the fact that it was close to its expiry date), however, a lab test performed in South Africa found the maize fit for human consumption. The group discussed the dilemma around whether to distribute food that has been deemed safe, yet is not palatable to the population, when there may be no other commodity available to program.

C-SAFE Zimbabwe underwent intense sensitisation around bulgar wheat – communicating the nutritional virtues of the new commodity, as well as cooking demonstrations (with dissemination of recipes). This eventually led to strong acceptance of the food.

--C-SAFE Zimbabwe Participant

Logistics

Several logistics lessons were discerned by the Nutrition working group during the C-SAFE program. Initially, the food was consigned to and offloaded at health centers, creating difficulties related to commodity management and accountability for the following reasons:

- NGOs were not present at the health centers and health workers had to arrange offloading, often paying workers with the food commodities meant for beneficiaries.
- Health centers serve a 20 kilometer radius, therefore, many mothers had to walk long distances to attend food distributions. The small rations were not always enough to justify the long walk – a factor believed to have contributed to high default rates.
- High turnover of health center staff meant that it was difficult to track workers to follow up on losses.
- Health centers could not store large quantities of food, and WFP was initially reluctant to deliver less than 10 metric tons to a location.

A solution was established later in the program by consigning commodities directly to the NGOs with the NGOs being held accountable for commodity accounting and not the health center. A later agreement by WFP to deliver 2 or 3 metric tons if health centers were grouped along an agreed route also improved the situation dramatically.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The M&E system for supplementary feeding was based on the national guidelines and was perceived to be sound by the Nutrition working group. While CoGuard focused on measuring impact as per the guidelines, i.e. number of admissions, number graduated, readmissions, discharged which included % cure, % default, deaths and transfers, C-SAFE concentrated on tracking commodities through establishing previous balances, quantities distributed and physical counts. This provided a good balance of impact and output monitoring. Challenges arose due to inconsistencies in distributing rations to beneficiaries, sometimes giving more than the recommended amount or less to balance stocks at the health care center level. Although these were only small differences in ration sizes, they accumulated over time.

It was interesting to note that some traditional beliefs and misconceptions prevented some beneficiaries from participating in the program. There is a taboo against measuring the height of a person while lying down unless that person is deceased, and there was a belief within the communities that pre-mixing oil, sugar and CSB resulted in children contracting scabies. It took nutrition workers a great deal of time to sensitize beneficiaries on these and other issues related to cultural beliefs and taboos.

The Program and its Impact

Supplementary feeding was conducted in all 194 health centers from March to August during which a total of 121,487 under five children were screened and 31,595 of these were referred for supplementary feeding. On each distribution day, the beneficiaries were re-screened to monitor their nutritional status. A total of 55,866 pregnant and lactating mothers were screened and 17,927 of these were referred for supplementary feeding.

Most mothers consider the food rations they receive inadequate to cover the food needs of their entire family for the two-week period. Despite numerous sensitization campaigns conducted at health centers, mothers do not consider the supplementary feeding ration as a supplement to the malnourished child's diet, but rather, food to be divided among the entire family.

- Nutrition Working Group

Between March and August, for under five children, a total of 6,364 under fives were discharged as cured, representing 43.8% of the discharge rate. 153 children died in the program representing 1.1% of discharged rate (note the deaths were not as a result of hunger from malnutrition but rather a result of other illnesses). 6,001 children defaulted (41.3%), and 512 were transferred to NRU (3.8 %), while 1,493 were non- respondent (10.3%). A total of 2,211 pregnant and lactating women were discharged as cured, representing a cure rate of 34.8%. 22 pregnant mothers died (0.3%) and 3,195 pregnant and lactating women defaulted (50.3%). Another 846 were registered as non-respondent (13.3%).

Low Cure Rates and High Default Rates: Based on the high default rate (it should be 5-10% but was 41.3% for children and 50.3% for women); and a low cured rate (overall it was 41% while the target is normally 70%), the Nutrition working group described the program as having limited success.

Some of the Lessons

The Nutrition working group speculates that the low cure rate and high default rate were due to the following:

- Food rations were shared among household members instead of prioritized for the malnourished family member. This is thought to be primarily due to general food insecurity at the household level. It was mentioned during discussion that this 'supplementary' ration was initially envisaged as a supplement to a general ration provide at the household level (supplied by WFP in Year 1 of C-SAFE), whereas in Year 2, the general ration had been phased out leaving the supplementary feeding program to be implemented in isolation, thus bound to be less effective. Despite numerous sensitization campaigns, most mothers do not see the ration as a supplement to the malnourished child's diet, but rather, as food to be divided among the entire family.
- High default rates could be attributed to the great distances that mothers had to travel to receive rations for themselves and their malnourished children. Many mothers reported that they did not have the time to walk to the health center as they had other children to care for and household duties.
- Lastly, disgruntled health workers were often cited as discouraging program participation within communities as they did not feel adequately compensated.

The Consortium continues to discuss and seek solutions to these issues as they move into the DAP in the coming weeks.

Exit Strategies – Better Practices

Some successful practices identified around exit strategies included:

- Holding meetings at the grass roots level at the inception of project. This made the exit from the community easier than anticipated, as people were able to reference being told the duration of the project, expected outcomes, and community contributions required.
- Establishment of community-based nutrition initiatives, which motivated caregivers to participate in programs and engendered a sense of ownership.
- Involving MCH coordinators in developing the exit strategies.
- Sharing of exit strategies and lessons learned (through cross visits and group discussions) among NGO members.
- Establishment of committees to monitor the continuity of activities, which were also linked to village health committees.
- The distribution of supplementary feeding equipment through Co-guard, which encouraged communities to continue the activities after the departure of the facilitating NGOs.

The Challenges

Challenges faced in developing and implementing exit strategies included:

- Despite efforts of NGOs to build capacity among Health Surveillance Assistants and Growth Monitoring Volunteers, commitment was weak due to lack of incentives.
- It was difficult to establish links between communities and health personnel. Small ration sizes, the long distances to health centers, and unmotivated Health Surveillance Assistants discouraged mothers from participating in the program. While more responsibility was given to volunteers in Year 2, a major challenge faced by them was distance between villages.
- Limited resources available after the phase out of Co-guard made it difficult for NGOs to follow through with phase-out strategies. Additionally, for areas that will continue to receive assistance under the DAP and PRRO (WFP), there has not been enough planning for linkages to the new programs due to lack of resources.

The Way Forward – Recommendations for Future Programming

The working group gave the following recommendations for future programming in Supplementary Feeding:

- Supplementary Feeding should be linked to other kinds of food security interventions, such as a general ration or Food for Work to ensure a minimal food security status at the household level, thereby encouraging the supplementary ration to go to the malnourished child.
- Community sensitization begins at the start of a project, including the planning stages as much as possible. All people involved in implementation, including communities, should clearly understand the objectives and key issues of the project.
- NGOs should seek innovative ways to make ration size and frequency of distribution more convenient to beneficiaries. The bi-weekly distributions were felt to be too small to justify long trips to distribution points. This posed challenges as supplementary rations are regarded as medicine for curative purposes, therefore national guidelines must be followed.
- Exit strategies should be identified during project planning and carried out throughout project implementation, with the strategy is reinforced and monitored at all stages.

FOOD FOR WORK WORKING GROUP

The Food for Work (FFW) working group visited the following seven NGO projects and based their presentation on a compiled trip report. They reviewed some of the challenges faced in FFW programming, and raised a series of questions for discussion and debate by the workshop participant. Their aim was to stimulate thinking and work towards resolving these issues for smoother implementation under the DAP and other future programming.

World Vision	Roads
CRS CADECOM	Roads & water harvesting structures
CARE International	Roads & Irrigation channels
Save US	Roads
Emmanuel International	Roads & tree nursery/wood lot
Africare	Roads
The Salvation Army	Roads

Food for Work Challenges

- First and foremost, the working group (and many of the participants at the workshop) expressed their frustration with the limitations C-SAFE Malawi faces in terms of the types of FFW activities allowed by the USAID Mission. It was noted that while the other two C-SAFE countries have implemented innovative Food for Assets (FFA) programming (such as training in conservation farming, community grain storage and community gardens); C-SAFE Malawi has essentially been confined to roads rehabilitation and irrigation projects. The need to consider more progressive and innovative approaches to using food in the development of community assets was identified as an issue for joint advocacy to the donors, and other stakeholders.
- The group noted a change in mindset in Malawi due to changes in the political environment such as the move from dictatorship to democracy. This change has impacted community level concepts and people's attitudes towards community work projects. Freedom to many means they are not obliged to engage in community work or self-help without payment, which has had a profound effect on the implementation of FFW/FFA projects.
- Insufficient non-food inputs, such as tools, presented a significant challenge to the successful implementation of FFW projects. Lack of building materials also made it difficult for C-SAFE NGOs to build crossing points such as culverts, undermining the utility of many projects. Despite this limitation, C-SAFE Malawi was very successful in working with communities to solicit contributions of tools and/or borrowing tools from the Ministry of Agriculture or District Assembly field offices. In some cases it was shown that by committing their own resources to the project, the sense of community ownership also increased. The Consortium was also successful in soliciting some donor funding (the USAID mission) to purchase tools and other inputs.
- C-SAFE's NGO members have their own organizational identities and cultures. Many preferred to use their own FFW operating procedures (to which they were accustomed), which in some cases were not in line with agreed implementation strategies of the Consortium.
- Some land-related conflicts arose when projects claimed land for dams and roads from households without compensation. These issues should be more carefully investigated and considered in future FFW programming.

- Like the other working groups, inadequate community sensitization was cited as the source of various problems during and after project implementation. The group noted a general emphasis on commodities over sensitization of communities. As one participant put it, “food first, sensitization later,” which of course negates the purpose of sensitization. The need to draw up contracts with community institutions regarding the development and maintenance of the asset being built or rehabilitated also proved a worthy lesson.

Targeting

Targeting beneficiaries for FFW projects appeared to be similar at most sites: vulnerable households, food insecure households, and those hosting orphans. However, one NGO simply took the first persons to sign up for the project, and this raised concern that NGOs aren't all adhering to C-SAFE targeting practices. Explanations for variations in targeting are:

- NGOs sometimes prioritize their way of working over C-SAFE guidelines.
- NGO staff who attend C-SAFE meetings may not be disseminating information to the field level.
- Activities are often done under time constraints.
- Limited staffing of the NGO at the field level.
- Pipeline timeframe was reduced requiring projects to wrap-up faster.

It was noticed that a much higher percentage of women than men were participating in most of the projects visited. It was explained by the fact that men prefer to earn cash for work, while women are willing to work for food. It was also noted that women had proved to be far more reliable in term of attendance for the project.



C-SAFE FFW activities undertaken in Malawi



Questions Raised by FFW Working Group

The following are questions raised in the workshop and in the working group's consolidated paper. Solutions and suggestions were not always provided – the questions were raised mainly to generate discussion / debate regarding possible solutions for future programming. Based on FFW working group field visits, an operational/lessons learned manual was developed, which could help in ensuring consistent approaches in FFW implementation in the future.

When should we do FFW programming?

Many of the FFW activities were carried out during the growing season and therefore interfered with farm activities. This created a dilemma for beneficiaries since it was difficult for them to concentrate on both, often resulting in less emphasis being placed on farming activities. The inherent difficulty is that people need food in the lean periods and therefore are willing to do FFW, but this is the time when they have the least energy. During periods of plenty, people have energy but FFW is deemed inappropriate, as food security is high.

A common belief is that road rehabilitation should not be done during the rainy season, however, the Salvation Army found this to be flawed. According to them, during the rainy season the soil is softer and easier to excavate and compact. Additionally, this is the time when there is the greatest food needs as this is also the hungry season.

Taking a step back, one participant suggested that better analysis of whether or not, in severely food insecure communities, FFW is the best activity to undertake, especially given C-SAFE's limited menu of FFW projects to implement. Also, NGOs need to be clear about whether they should do FFW just because they already have a presence in certain communities, or whether it is more appropriate to expand to more needy areas. To this end, the group felt that the guiding principles of targeting for FFW needed to be discussed.

How many beneficiaries should be enrolled?

A primary question to ask is 'Are we designing the project based on beneficiary needs (for the asset being created/rehabilitated)? Or the need for the work?' It was found that identifying a standard number of people for FFW projects was not always feasible. Factors to consider are the population density of the area and the nature and scope of work. A very important factor is the amount of food aid available, and thus FFW must be programmed in such a way that the work required relative to the amount of food available is balanced. Balance is also required between the number of beneficiaries to complete work quickly and desired implementation periods.

What can be done to ensure that FFW structures are maintained?

A second round of monitoring of C-SAFE sites found the roads built were still passable approximately a year after rehabilitation. Some lessons identified towards safeguarding / ensuring maintenance of the asset / structure are:

- Tools can be left behind for maintenance.
- As much technical training as possible should be provided during implementation.
- FFW committees need to be empowered and integrated into the development of community structures.
- Relevant government technicians, such as District Roads Supervisors, should be enlisted to help communities with maintenance. Contracts with communities and/or local institutions will reinforce this.
- NGOs need to prioritize the rehabilitation of existing structures, instead of creating new ones.
- The Malawian government is moving toward more decentralization, and NGOs should aim to help communities to understand how best to benefit from this process.
- In some cases, it may help to involve other NGOs towards maintaining the structure.

COMMODITIES WORKING GROUP

The Commodities Working Group presentation began with the statement: “no commodity, no activity” to emphasize the vital role that the commodities teams play in the overall scheme of the program. During its meetings, the Commodities working group discussed the flow of food commodities starting with call forwards from the donors through to the Food Distribution Points. The group monitors and integrates information from the other working groups to prepare monthly distribution plans and offer remedial suggestions, should there be problems faced by consortium members.

Commodity Management

In Malawi (but not in Zambia and Zimbabwe), the UN World Food Programme (WFP) was used as the logistics contractor for the C-SAFE program for commodities received at the port of Beira in Mozambique and transported to C-SAFE Malawi’s Final Distribution Points (FDPs). This Logistics Service Agreement (LSA) was entered into for several reasons. The country has severe transport constraints – limited infrastructure and storage capacity – and two separate contracting systems would have led to competition for transporters and storage. WFP had existing contacts with transporters and in-country experience as the logistics coordinating body under the 2002 Joint Emergency Food Aid Programme (JEFAP), which was felt would be useful. Overall, it was thought that by contracting WFP, it would avoid putting unnecessary pressure on the already constrained transport industry, and that this arrangement might facilitate the development of an expanded view of ‘partnerships’ between NGO’s and WFP. Finally, the choice of contracting WFP in Malawi made it possible for C-SAFE to compare outsourced pipeline management in Malawi, with self-management in other countries.

While the above listed benefits above are acknowledged, overall C-SAFE Malawi found the use of WFP as transport contractor to be extremely challenging. Lessons Learned from this experience were as follows:

- The LSA with WFP needs to clearly define the roles and responsibilities as well as lines of communication for both parties. For example, while the current contract ensured that secondary warehousing and transport could be undertaken by NGOs, it did not say that these services would be reimbursed by WFP. This led to enormous confusion and debate around the best course of action.
- Systems should be strengthened to ensure more accurate and efficient deliveries. Late, partial and non-delivery needs to be minimized, as well as improved communication from WFP where these problems arise. These types of errors often resulted in beneficiaries walking twice or long distances to new delivery locations and in some cases when this happened, commodities were received by non-beneficiaries.
- Existing market constraints need to be factored into logistics planning. While inconsistent deliveries were sometimes attributed to errors in planning by the NGOs, the more common reason was that transport contractors were more interested in moving tobacco (which was more lucrative) than food commodities, a constraint that was not factored in by the service provider.
- Dispatch of vegetable oil needs to be precise and according to planning documents. Rounding up of quantities for easy dispatch ignores NGO storage and security constraints for leftover quantities at the different distribution centers.
- Minimal quality requirements should be established from which to identify and select transporters. Trucks from the current fleet experienced frequent breakdowns and some proved un-roadworthy.
- Port / Country Office communications should be strengthened within WFP as well as between C-SAFE Malawi and its regional office. Communication problems between WFP

Beira and WFP Malawi regarding shipment arrivals, discharge, etc... made it difficult for C-SAFE to know which commodities would be available when making commodity distribution plans. Similar difficulties arose with C-SAFE Malawi and its regional office although in both cases improvement has been cited in Year 2.

- Improved access and transparency of WFP warehouses is needed for C-SAFE to meet its audit obligations. As a UN agency, WFP would not allow CARE internal auditors to audit their books for C-SAFE commodities, citing the need for WFP HQ authorization prior to providing access. This hampered CARE's ability to meet its audit obligations.

It was noted that in establishing a regional framework, technical expertise in commodities, as well as strong communications in the commodities arena is a must. Lack of strong technical support (in commodities) from the regional C-SAFE office at the early stages of the grant, combined with high turnover and low capacity at the country level hampered a smooth start in managing commodities at all levels. Year 2 has experienced considerable improvement in most areas, including improved relations and follow-up on C-SAFE concerns by WFP, especially following the assignment of a C-SAFE point person within the WFP office.

Successes

There is also a substantial list of successes and better practices identified the Commodities working group during C-SAFE Year Two. These include:

- Good interagency relationships and a team spirit was created by virtue of working collaboratively.
- The bi-weekly meeting fostered active participation and an opportunity for NGOs to express their opinions and engage in constructive debate.
- Using a rotational chair during the bi-weekly meetings helped with capacity building, as well as engendered a feeling of ownership, and shared responsibilities.
- Commodity management and reporting skills were transferred from more experienced staff to national staff of NGOs. These were enhanced by the intra-consortium training, which included three workshops. A workshop at the regional level gave C-SAFE Malawi NGOs exposure to a bigger picture of C-SAFE, and added to their knowledge through a sharing of better practices.
- Commodity audits by the C-SAFE lead agency (CARE) and post-distribution monitoring has helped NGOs improve their performance.
- Field monitoring visits by the working groups enhanced positive learning during program implementation. C-SAFE warehouse officer's visits to WFP warehouse and distribution centers were also instructive and proved helpful.
- There was a significant reduction of losses in Year Two due to improved systems and communications.
- Significant improvement was observed in NGO capacity to track commodities in Year 2 due to ongoing capacity building and accumulated experience.
- The enlisting of beneficiaries as committee members created a sense of ownership of the program within communities.
- In most cases C-SAFE was able to cross-lend commodities with WFP, which helped prevent pipeline disruptions.

The enlisting of beneficiaries as committee members created a sense of ownership of the program within communities.

-Commodity Working Group

Commodity Reporting



As with commodity management, the group found commodity reporting to be fraught with challenges, mainly stemming from the LSA arrangement with WFP. In the future:

- The LSA should include mandatory reporting time frames for the service provider, so that C-SAFE can meet its donor requirements.
- A dedicated staff member should be made available within the office of the service provider (especially for commodity reporting) given the volume of business this C-SAFE contract required.
- The service provider's ability to meet donor requirements on behalf of C-SAFE should be assessed in advance and arrangements made accordingly. Because WFP was unable to report on commodities in a manner compliant with the donor's regulations (USAID regulation 11), alternative arrangements were made later in the grant. C-SAFE members prepared the 'Damaged or Missing Commodity Report' themselves and C-SAFE obtained a waiver from the donor on certain aspects of reporting.
- Reporting formats should be developed early and remain consistent throughout the grant. Changing of reporting formats as the program was implemented led to confusion and early development of reporting formats on a regional level and at the onset of the operation could have avoided this.
- Like other areas that require expertise, capacity to prepare/submit accurate reports should also be assessed early in the project and staff support and training should be provided to NGOs that require it.

MANAGEMENT

There was no Management working group in Malawi, rather the management presentation at the workshop was drawn primarily from experiences of the lead NGO, CARE.

Successes and Challenges in Collaboration

Positive aspects in terms of collaboration that emerged:

- Resource sharing was at no extra cost to the NGOs because of the existence of the consortium. For instance, most of the NGOs did not have qualified Civil Engineers on staff, but through membership in the consortium, they received training from CARE in basic road maintenance without any additional cost.
- Due to collaboration with WFP there were fewer pipeline breaks.
- Through C-SAFE, all members were able to ensure representation with both the donor (USAID/FFP stationed a representative in Malawi to work with C-SAFE) and national level committees such as the TNP, DPMA, UNICEF, Ministry of Health and Population and District Assemblies.
- The C-SAFE Malawi decision to transition to a Development Assistance Program (DAP) after two years of implementation under C-SAFE's Title II Emergency funded program was made smoother because of the existing collaborative environment. The design process was likely to have been more difficult had it not been for the lessons learned under C-SAFE and the culture of working together through a common mechanism. Partner NGOs readily contributed different resources - human, financial and material - as well as their time during the development of the DAP proposal.
- The regional Learning Center emerged as a valuable collaborative effort, as a tool to inform and educate each other as well as donors, and as a method of creating awareness around C-SAFE's activities.

'Resource sharing was at no extra cost to the NGOs because of the existence of the consortium. '

For instance, most of the NGOs did not have qualified Civil Engineers on staff, but through membership in the consortium, they received training from CARE in basic road maintenance without any additional cost.

- Lessons from the Management Review

The following items were identified as challenges in terms of collaboration:

- WFP appeared unable to adapt to a non-traditional role, and to act as a service provider for the NGOs according to its contractual agreement to provide logistics services.
- Information shared in working groups and at country-level meetings did not appear to always trickle down to the field, i.e. there is room for improved dissemination of information within organizations.
- While emphasis was put on constructive criticism, sometimes consortium members got caught up in non-constructive finger pointing. A focus on 'what lessons can be drawn,' instead of 'who did what wrong' would be helpful in the development of future programming.

Management of a Consortium

As the lead agency for the Malawi consortium, several lessons were identified by CARE with regards to management of the Consortium:

- With the many NGO members (nine), there were obvious capacity differences with respect to programming, commodity management as well as other areas. Some type of capacity assessment to gauge the ability of each member to implement a Title II program would have been helpful and should be done in the future. This would be a first step to addressing gaps in capacity across the membership. Along these lines, it may have been useful to conduct training, re-tool staff and possibly bring in additional technical expertise during the shift from JEFAP to C-SAFE, as C-SAFE proved to be more complex in areas like M&E and commodity management.
- NGO capacities varied resulting in differences in quality of implementation as well as reporting. The differences in approaches to food security programming resulted in the different levels of effectiveness and efficiency. There were some important surprises here -- some of the smaller, supposedly 'low-capacity' NGOs out-performed the larger, well-staffed ones, and provided better practices for the rest of the consortium to follow.
- A regional Design, Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held at the start-up of C-SAFE at the regional level. Representation, however, from each country was at the Country Director and Program Manager level only. In the future, some representation from the field implementation level should participate to ease the process of translating regional plans/decisions to actual implementation.
- Management of a consortium demands frequent interaction among partners, and requires collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, and dedication/commitment from all partners. While management by consensus is clearly a labor intensive and time consuming process, the end result has been stronger buy-in and more effective implementation of decisions by the Consortium.

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- Lessons from the Management Review

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

In summary, the following Better Practices, Challenges and Opportunities were identified across the four working groups, and as a reflection of the discussion that emerged during the workshop.

Better Practices (Crosscutting)

The **working group construct** emerged as a better practice for the Malawi Consortium. The groups strengthened C-SAFE partnerships and helped improve coordination and implementation methodology. They created a forum for learning, aided by inviting technical specialists, consultants and other stakeholders to meetings. The working groups also foster partnerships beyond the consortium, based on areas of specialization. The Nutrition working group, for example, participated in the Targeted Nutrition Program (TNP), a forum for nutritionists chaired by the Ministry of Health and Populations and attended by UNICEF and other NGOs in addition to C-SAFE members. As a member of the TNP, C-SAFE was able to contribute to the development of national nutritional protocols that offer guidelines on ration scales, food basket, frequency of distributions, and discharge criteria for supplementary feeding programs of malnourished children and mothers. Similarly, the Chronically Ill working group established a relationship with the TB control program in Malawi and WFP, while the FFW working group adopted work norms agreed and approved by the Department of Works and worked closely with District Assemblies at district level.

The Consortium arrangement as a whole was found to be better practice. It was successful according to the Nutrition working group in particular due to its ability to facilitate learning such as the sharing that took place around the development of exit strategies. Challenges faced by NGOs in different areas were easily shared and agencies learned from one another, and it is believed that there has been a marked improvement in NGO relations in Malawi due to the Consortium format. This improvement started with JEFAP, went through C-SAFE, and it is hoped to continue under I-LIFE, the upcoming Malawi DAP.

The wide geographical coverage and volume of commodity brought into Malawi by C-SAFE **raised its profile with the Government of Malawi**. The Government gained respect for the C-SAFE membership and its opinion with regards to food security related issues. The government, for example, consulted with the Consortium (in addition to WFP/FAO), to obtain C-SAFE's opinion on the food security situation prior to declaring a disaster earlier this year. Similarly, it was noted that the Malawi NGO members had a **greater voice at the regional level** due to the regional consortium format, and the consolidated influence of 16 member NGOs across the region.

Lastly, the **Learning Center concept** also emerged as an innovative and valuable tool for sharing of better practices and lessons learned among agencies and as an informative tool for donors and other external stakeholders.

Partnerships at all levels brought diverse views, wealth of experience and added strength to the consortium. It helped in sharing of experiences, skills, resources and information, building capacity within C-SAFE and communities. All this allowed the program to move forward at a fast and effective pace.

- Chronically Ill working group

Future Challenges and Opportunities

Advocacy and Structural Approaches:

- Challenges faced over the past two years will influence future programming. The DAP, for example, will **offer wider programming possibilities to ensure community resilience** through application of developmental relief concept. This transition will offer continued learning for wider NGO community.
- There is **growing donor support for the consortium concept**, as donors are more interested in supporting collaborative 'programs' rather than NGO projects per se. This is viewed as potentially a more successful way to help reduce poverty in countries like Malawi.
- The Consortium format is **still evolving and further sensitization within the membership on its structure and benefits may be needed**. Workshop participants repeatedly used terms associated with past partnering arrangements - such as implementing partner (IP), instead of members, leading observers to think that the NGOs have simply substituted C-SAFE for WFP in their conceptualization of the partnership arrangement. This suggests that members are still adapting to the shift from service providers (i.e. for WFP), to owners of the process. On a similar note, participants also gave the impression that they often awaited instruction from the top, rather than seeing themselves as co-owners of the program with the ability to address concerns by raising them with their consortium partners and jointly finding a solution.

Program Implementation:

- The **importance of community sensitization** was emphasized by all four working groups. It was felt that for all aspects of programming, in the future, more time and emphasis should be placed on community sensitization to ensure that communities have a strong understanding of the aims, processes and expected outcomes of the program.
- The issue of **paying allowances to government officials** generated much discussion and hampered efforts to form a true working partnership with government officials. It was acknowledged that a root cause of the problem is the low pay of officials. Discussion is ongoing with regards to a viable solution.
- **Exit strategies**, with some notable exceptions, should receive increased attention and emphasis in the future. Late in starting and inadequately resourced, C-SAFE Malawi struggled to put in place solid exit plans in its last year of C-SAFE. The working group cross visits helped a great deal in that the better strategies were identified, and are expected to be adopted by other NGOs despite coming rather late in program.
- Lastly, **M&E systems and utilization of information** were cited by several groups as in need of strengthening. It was noted that though M&E officers from each member NGO did meet regularly during the program, there was no separate M&E working group in Malawi, rather M&E was spread across the working groups to try to entrench M&E into each. It was suggested that like Zambia, an M&E Technical Working Group might be more useful and should be considered under the upcoming DAP to address some of the acknowledged weaknesses of M&E within C-SAFE Malawi. The C-SAFE workshop participant from Lusaka noted that the Zambia M&E technical group meets regularly; helps keep M&E issues uniform across the consortium; and respond with the development of relevant M&E tools for member needs. A 100% dedicated M&E officer in that country also ensures stronger M&E systems.

Logistics:

- Some suggested that **secondary warehouses** need to be created to increase the number of FDPs so that beneficiaries cover realistic distances (at the most a walking distance of 5km). Many failings (including high default rates in supplementary feeding) were attributed to the **long distances** beneficiaries had to walk for distributions.
- It was noted that the NGOs did not have to deal directly with transporters under C-SAFE (since they subcontracted to WFP), however, with the recent decision to manage **logistics** independently under the DAP, the Consortium will have to undergo **significant preparation**, in terms of capacity building and installation of systems.
- The rapid rate of **staff turnover** was raised, however no solutions were advanced. One participant noted that heavy recruitment of Malawi staff for Darfur and other emergencies was a natural occurrence in the humanitarian field, and was a complement to the quality of staff / the expertise that has been developed in Malawi.
- It was suggested that delays in project implementation might have been avoided if there was some method of **decentralizing** to the district level **funds for purchasing tools and equipment** for Food for Work. This might also reduce transportation costs.

Learning from One Another:

- The issue was raised of how to ensure that the C-SAFE NGOs experiences - particularly **lessons learned** and better practices - in Malawi, as well as Zambia and Zimbabwe, are **transferred worldwide** and adapted where appropriate to local situations. The Learning Center's dissemination of information was seen as a good start.
- It was noted that C-SAFE Zimbabwe and Zambia have developed some **innovative M&E tools**, which may address some of the M&E weaknesses and gaps identified in this workshop. The regional representatives in attendance offered to ensure that these tools are shared with the Malawi members.
- It is hoped that in Year 3 the C-SAFE **Regional Learning Center continues to liaise with the Malawi Consortium** under the DAP so that the sharing of lessons learned and better practices can continue to be shared across the region.

EXPERIENCES OF THE C-SAFE MALAWI CONSORTIUM IN PARTNERSHIPS: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE BETTER (PRACTICES)

POSITIVE ASPECTS	CHALLENGES	BETTER PRACTICE
improved relationships and networking	<p>lack of trust and transparency amongst partners on the initial stage of the project implementation;</p> <p>misunderstandings about roles and responsibilities of different partners at different levels</p>	<p>maintaining transparent and open communication among partners and seeking each other's advice in areas of strength should be encouraged</p> <p>terms of reference should be written to support partnerships and to make more formal the roles and responsibilities of each partner.</p>
minimization of duplication of effort	lack of co-ordination amongst partners, mostly due to busy schedules and giving priority to own NGO goals	partners should be obliged to participate consistently in working groups and District Executive Committee meetings to learn from other NGOs and community-based organizations and to identify potential partnerships, strengthen partnerships, and to avoid duplicating efforts of organizations working in the same target areas.
cross-learning visits between NGOs	Time and resources were limited	Visiting one another's project sites stimulated new thinking and constructive debate.
collaboration with local government	difficulties in stimulating initiative from District Assemblies	NGOs need to make the effort to update District Assemblies on their program activities, an information sheet was suggested as one tool for this
partnership events strengthen bonds and working relationships between members	limited human and financial resources for partnership purposes	the process of developing partnership and maintaining it requires adequate funding, therefore it is a must for new programs of C-SAFE nature to plan and budget for the processes and events that are involved in partnerships
community-based organizations disseminated messages about the program, selection criteria and arrangements regarding distribution which made implementation easier	<p>expectation of allowances by government staff hindered progress and good partnership;</p> <p>political interference during program implementation, in some areas in specific the use of C-SAFE food as a campaign tool by telling people that the food that was being distributed is for everyone in the community and claiming responsibility for bringing the food aid to their area;</p>	C-SAFE in Zimbabwe shared that they emphasize to government officials that they receive salary and per diem from their ministries, and that their collaboration is a contribution from government toward humanitarian efforts , and therefore they would not receive any payment from C-SAFE. While the NGOs in a consortium may all opt for the same strategy, one problem can be that non-member NGOs will pay allowances. In this case it may be possible for NGOs in a consortium or other organizing body to pressure NGOs who pay allowances into compliance. One NGO explained that a community needed Ministry of Agriculture technical inputs, so they empowered the community to demand ministry services rather than the NGO asking for the services , and thereby no allowances were expected.

<p>support and training for community based organizations results in stronger and more effective programming by NGOs.</p>	<p>Resources for support and training for community-based organizations is limited</p>	<p>include training components for all partners, especially those at the community level, to ensure uniformity and improved quality of outcomes. Training should be accompanied by implementation guidelines for easy comprehension and application by users. Ensure availability of professional staff to train those working in home-based care, community organizations, the community at large, and NGO staff, in order to maximize impact.</p>
<p>through partnerships and the linking of activities with other programs and groups that promote HIV and AIDS information, HIV and AIDS messages were disseminated to beneficiaries</p>	<p>limited staff capacity with regards to HIV and AIDS expertise; sensitivity of the issues around activities for the chronically ill; in some cases talk about HIV and AIDS and use of condoms has been very sensitive</p>	<p>ensure greater collaboration with institutions that target the same communities as C-SAFE. In particular, link with the National Aids Council (NAC), National TB Control Program and other relevant NGOs</p>
<p>NGOs designed exit strategies together</p>	<p>many beneficiaries remain needy, so phasing out is still a blow to their household food security</p>	<p>improvements may be expected in terms of exit strategies if the following are improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exit strategies are an integral part of discussions at the planning stages of the program. - discuss and design potential exit strategies with the communities - budget for exit strategies - train staff on exit strategies - identify partners early on that can become part of exit strategies - conduct assessments in communities to phase out area by area rather than all at once - exit strategies need to feature into the M&E framework, and regular monitoring of progress of exit strategies should continually take place, with modifications made to the program where necessary.

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C-SAFE MALAWI:

AFRICARE
CARE
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES
EMMANUEL INTERNATIONAL
MALAWI RED CROSS
SAVE THE CHILDREN US
SAVE THE CHILDREN UK
THE SALVATION ARMY
WORLD VISION



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